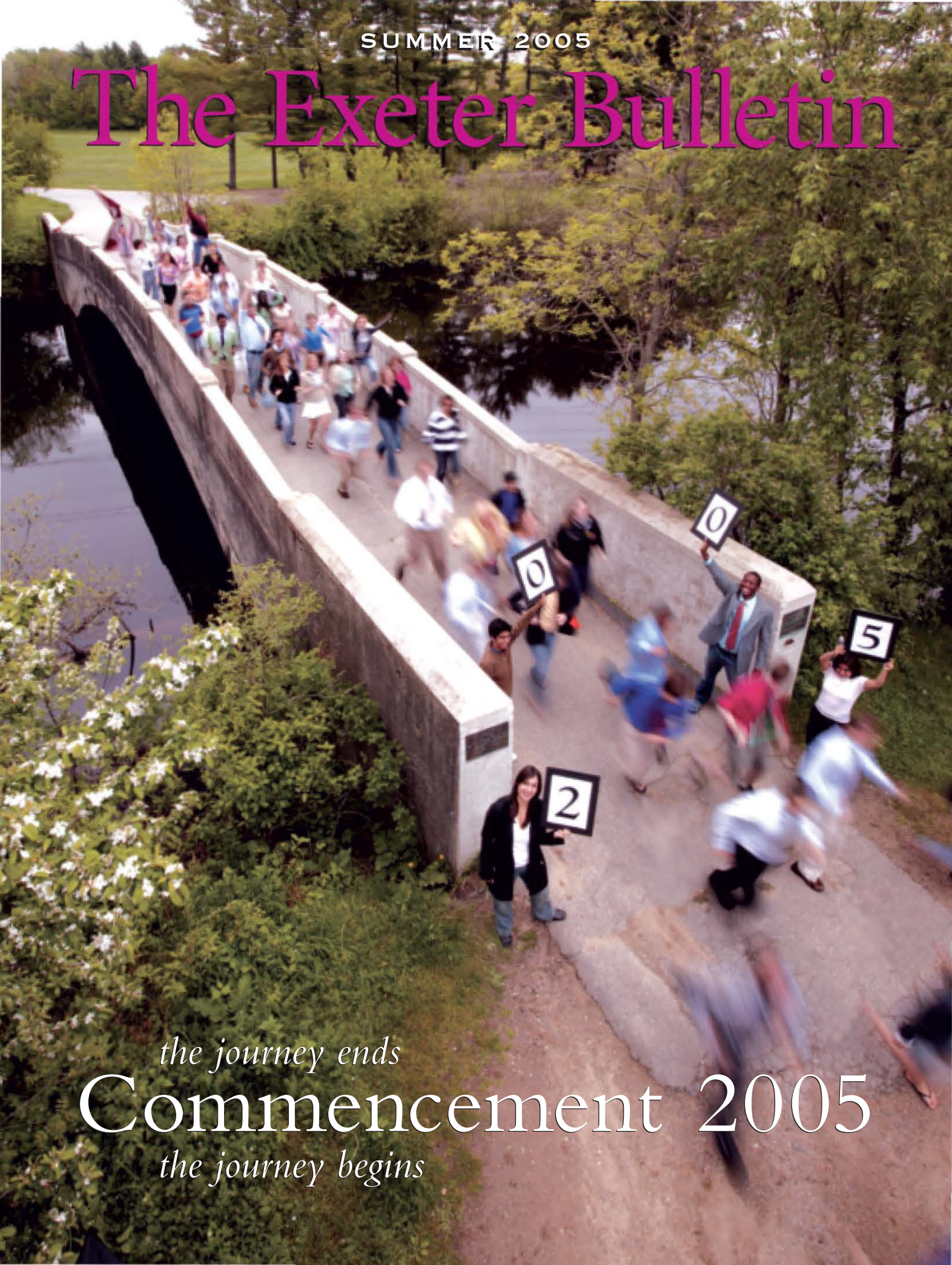


SUMMER 2005

# The Exeter Bulletin

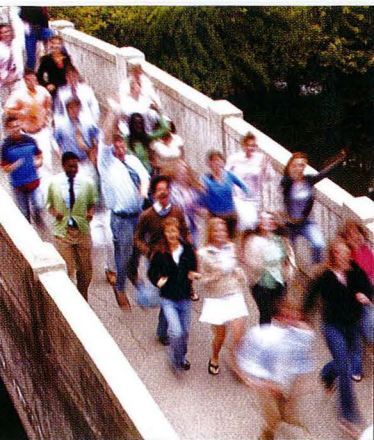


*the journey ends*

## Commencement 2005

*the journey begins*





# The Exeter Bulletin

VOLUME C, NO. 4 SUMMER 2005

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## CONTENTS



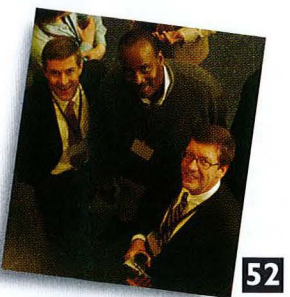
16



26



36



52

## Features

### 16 COMMENCEMENT 2005

On June 12, one journey ended and a new one began for the class of 2005. *Commencement address by Principal Ty Tingley.*

### 26 GOING THE DISTANCE

The journeys of four graduating seniors, each of whom came a long way. *Article by Susannah Clark '84*

### 30 'THE BEST HALF-HOUR OF THE WEEK'

For many members of the PEA community, Thursday morning Meditations are just that. *Excerpts from the just-published collection A Book of Meditations, Volume Two.*

### 36 NO POOL? NO PROBLEM!

While Exeter builds a new, state-of-the-art swim facility, the girls water polo team thrives on the road. Plus, spring sports. *Article by Ken Belbin*

## Departments

2 Around the Table

6 Table Talk with Adelaide Fuller '05 and David Walsh '05

14 Exonians in Review: *Rescued From the Reich* by Bryan Mark Rigg '91

40 Class Notes  
*With profiles of David Putnam '59, Christopher Moutis '82 and Keya Keita '95*

48 From Every Quarter

52 Reunions

100 Finis Origine Pendet  
*By Sartaj Shyam Narang '04*

**On the cover:** They're out of here! Members of the class of 2005 sprint across the Exeter River footbridge. Photograph by Brian Crowley.

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10% POST-CONSUMER CONTENT

# News and Events

## FACULTY PRIZES

### Brown Family Faculty Award

**Kathy Brownback**  
*Chair, Religion*

**Susan Keeble**  
*Mathematics*

**Philip Mallinson**  
*Mathematics*

**Scott Saltman**  
*Science*

**Ralph Sneed**  
*English*

### Radford Fellowship

**Don Briselden**  
*Director, Facilities Management*

**Hilary Coder**  
*Director, Summer Athletics*

**Kathleen Curwen**  
*Chair, Science*

**Tom Seidenberg**  
*Mathematics*

**Paul Langford**  
*Chair, Classical Languages*

### George S. Heyer '48 Teaching Fund

**David Weber**  
*English*

### Charles E. Ryberg '63 Teaching Fund

**Amy Schwartz**  
*History*

### Dormitory Adviser Award

**Jeff Ibbotson**  
*Dow House*

## NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIRS APPOINTED

Dean of Faculty Barbara Eggers has announced the appointment of four new department chairs: Kathleen Brownback, religion; Carol Cahalane, health education; M. Rebecca Moore, English; Lawrence Smith, history.

Brownback, who holds a B.A. from Wellesley and a M.Div. from Harvard, has been a member of the faculty since 1988. She joined the deans office in 1991 and served as dean of students from 1996 to 2001. She oversees the assembly program and has just completed a term as clerk of the trustees. She was awarded a Rupert Radford Faculty Fellowship Prize "for distinguished and faithful service" in 2001 and a Brown Family Faculty Fund Prize at the last faculty meeting this spring.

Cahalane became an associate dean of students in 1996, six years after being named to the faculty in 1990. The 1993 winner of the Charles E. Ryberg Award, which recognizes dedication to teaching, she is a former head of Moulton House and Lamont Hall. Cahalane earned a bachelor's of science and a master's in education at the University of Massachusetts. This past year, she served on the publications and health and wellness committees.

Since 1994, Moore has been an instructor in English and girls crew coach. She is a co-founder of the Exeter Humanities Institute and continues to serve as a lead teacher. A former head of McConnell Hall, she was the recipient of the Dormitory Adviser Award in 1998. Moore, who earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at Harvard, was the English teacher with School Year Abroad in Rennes, France, in 1994–1995.

Smith was appointed to the history faculty in 1989. He resided first in Cilley Hall and then moved to Wentworth as dorm head, where his work earned him the Dormitory Adviser Award in 1997. A graduate of Princeton with a master's from the University of New Hampshire, he is a member of the discipline committee and a co-founder and lead teacher with the Exeter Humanities Institute. He is a longtime coach of the boys varsity crew team and the recipient of the Brown Family Faculty Fund Prize in 2002.



GABRIEL COONEY

Kathy Brownback



BRIAN CROWLEY

Carol Cahalane



ART DURITY

Becky Moore



BRIAN CROWLEY

Lawrence Smith



## NATHANIEL BUTLER '68 RECEIVES FOUNDER'S DAY AWARD

At assembly on May 20, the Academy honored Nathaniel Butler '68 with its Founder's Day Award. Established in 1976, it is given annually by the General Alumni/ae Association (GAA) in recognition of exceptional and sustained service to the Academy over time.

President Jean du Pont '78 characterized Butler as a longtime leader and staunch supporter of the Academy. "For over 30 years," she told him, "you have thrown yourself into a host of volunteer roles for Exeter: class agent, class president, director of the general alumni/ae association, and reunion and regional committee membership. Since 1991, in an unofficial capacity, you have helped the Academy reconstruct its relationship with gay and lesbian alumni/ae, and been both a catalyst for, and a witness to, profound changes at the school. The breadth of your service to Exeter and its people, and the depth of care with which this service has been rendered, are exemplary."

Butler described his work for the academy as his "avocation," and said he drew inspiration from the "courage and idealism of the 1960s." At Exeter and in the country as a whole, "there was," he said, "a sense that things could be made better."

In addition to his many volunteer roles, Butler also established the Butler Scholarship Fund in honor of his late father, Jonathan Butler '35, and he makes a point of visiting the recipients on campus at least once each year.

In 1994, Butler received the President's Award for service to Exeter in recognition of his work as a liaison between the Academy and its gay and lesbian alumni/ae. He continued in this role for another seven years, and continues to participate in Academy programs on gay and lesbian issues today.

A resident of Boston, Butler was a four-year student at Exeter before matriculating at Harvard, where he earned a bachelor's degree in government. He spent three years in the Navy, serving 16 months in Vietnam before earning an M.B.A. from Harvard in 1975, and a M.S.W. from the Simmons School of Social Work in 1982. His career has been in the field of health-care management.



*Nat Butler '68 (center) was honored for his exceptional and sustained volunteer service. Presenting him with the Founder's Day Award are GAA President Jenny du Pont '78 (left) and Principal Ty Tingley (right).*

## Two Exeter Seniors Named Presidential Scholars

Not one, but two members of the class of 2005 have been chosen for one of the highest academic honors given to graduating high school seniors. Elizabeth MacFarlane, of Oxford, England, and Gordon Powers of East Kingston, NH, were named 2005 Presidential Scholars this spring by the U.S. Department of Education.

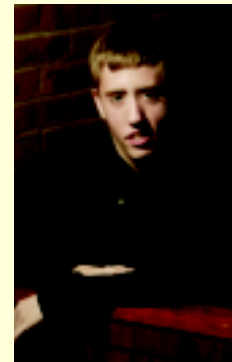
MacFarlane and Powers were chosen on the basis of test scores, as well as their personal characteristics, their leadership and community service activities, and personal essays they each wrote. In all, just 141 Presidential Scholars were chosen from the more than 3 million eligible high school seniors.

Rare as this honor may be, Powers is not the first member of his family to be named a Presidential Scholar. In fact, he first learned of the national academic competition from his cousin, who was named a Presidential Scholar last year. "I was both surprised and grateful to learn I had won," says Powers, who will attend Harvard. "It's an honor to receive this award after all the hard work I've had in my studies." That hard work has included the challenges Powers faced because he is hard of hearing and has a speech impairment. "But this is Exeter," he adds, "and everyone works hard." (For more on Powers, see page 26.)

MacFarlane will delay her early acceptance to Princeton to spend next year living and working in Ireland at Ballytobin, the residential program for people with special needs that was co-founded by an Exeter alumnus. MacFarlane says the award validated a decision she made early on at Exeter to focus on subjects that most interested her, even as teachers and advisers counseled a more general approach. "It shows the choices I made earlier in my high school years were good ones—that is, good for me," she says.



**Elizabeth  
MacFarlane**



**Gordon  
Powers**



## HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO GET AN EDUCATION?

TO GET TO EXETER, PARNIAN NAZARY '06 CROSSED THE KHYBER PASS

By Susannah Clark '84

For most Exeter students, June means the end of school and the chance to return home after nine months of hard work.

During her first year at Exeter, Parnian Nazary, an upper from Kabul, Afghanistan, probably worked harder than many of her classmates. But when June came, the ongoing political turmoil in Afghanistan, and concerns about possible new regulations and restrictions on travel in and out of the country, meant Nazary shouldn't return home. Had she done so, says her adviser, religion instructor Jamie Hamilton, she might not have been able to return to Exeter on time in September.

Setbacks are, however, nothing new for the 18-year-old Nazary. In fact, living in Afghanistan under the Taliban—which severely circumscribed the rights of women and girls, including their access to education—seems only to have made her more fervent in her pursuit of schooling. “More than anything else,” she says, “it is my wish to get a good education.”

Nazary's soft-spoken, friendly manner gives little hint of the trials she has endured. But as she describes her experiences, her determination is unmistakable. Under the Taliban, who took power in 1996 when Nazary was 10, Afghan women were required to wear burkas in public, something Nazary says she tried to put off for as long as possible. “It was uncomfortable, especially in the summer,” she says of the traditional Afghan robe that covers the wearer from head to toe. “It's really big, really heavy, really warm. It also makes it hard to see.”

One day when she was 13, Nazary was out in Kabul with her mother when they were stopped by a group of men. “They were shouting at me, ‘You are old enough to wear a burka! Don't come out like this!’ ” she recalls. “I was really scared.” After that encounter, Nazary just stayed at home—for a total of two years. She broke her resolution only once, donning a burka to attend her grandfather's funeral.

Unwilling to leave her home but determined to continue her education, Nazary began to teach herself math, history and drawing. Friends brought her materials for studying English as a second language—her primary language is Farsi—and after she completed two years of self-study, her neighbors began sending their daughters to her so that she could teach them

English as well. “I had about seven students,” she says. “They would bring their books secretly.” Had they been discovered, Nazary says it's likely she would have been disciplined.

After the U.S. Army arrived in Kabul, the school Nazary had attended before the Taliban seized control reopened. But it was, she says, a shadow of its former self. “All of the books had been burned, and I didn't think I would be able to get a good education.” It was then she began to consider leaving Afghanistan, and in 2003 she made her first trip to the United States, as part of the Seeds of Peace program, the nonprofit organization that brings teenagers from regions of conflict in the Middle East and Central Asia to a summer camp in Maine. It was through Seeds of Peace that she met Jamie Hamilton and Michael Gary, Exeter's director of admissions, who encouraged her to apply to the Academy. She was admitted for the 2004-05 school year.

Despite the educational advantages that coming to Exeter offered, “it was,” Hamilton notes, “a hard family decision. I think her parents were pretty amazing to let her come. But they gave her the opportunity.”

When Nazary finally arrived at Exeter—10 days after the start of classes, due to problems she encountered leaving Afghanistan—she experienced significant culture shock. Despite her studies in Kabul, her English was not fluent. “We all

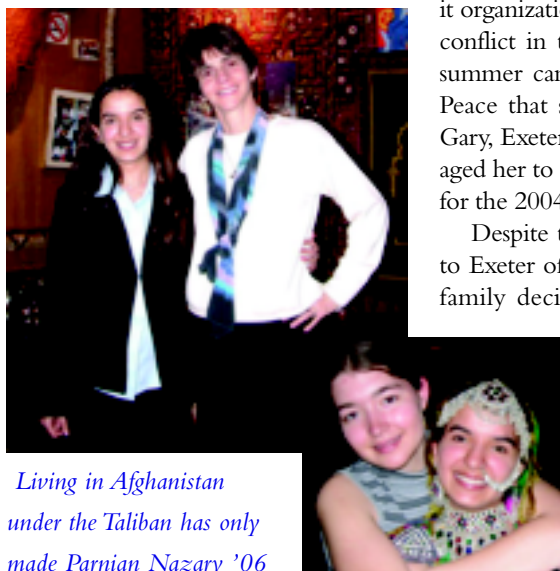
worried that language was going to be an issue,” Hamilton recalls. “But Parnian's like a sponge, and every day she picked up words.” Assigned to read *Brave New World* in her English class, she took five hours to read 20 pages, so Hamilton found Farsi translations of a few of her assigned books. “But now,” Hamilton adds, “Parnian doesn't even need them. We can

see how far she's come.”

Not surprisingly, Nazary also faced some significant gaps in her knowledge base, particularly in math. But those gaps proved to be the beginning of a close friendship with dorm mate Heather Carmichael, a senior from Weston, MA, and a gifted math student. She began tutoring Nazary, who proved herself a quick study. Placed in a lower math course at the start of her first term, she finished the year at close to grade level.

Her year has been full of firsts. First bike ride, thanks to Exeter friends who found her a bike and a helmet and taught her how to ride. First viola lessons, thanks to encouragement from Carmichael, an accomplished cellist, who helped Nazary find both an instrument and a teacher. “She has a wonderful laugh and a wonderful sense of humor,” says Hamilton, “and she's made good friends who are like sisters for her.”

(continued on page 98)



*Living in Afghanistan under the Taliban has only made Parnian Nazary '06 more fervent in her pursuit of schooling. “More than anything else,” says Nazary (top photo: with her adviser, religion instructor Jamie Hamilton; bottom photo, in traditional Afghan dress, with dorm mate Heather Carmichael '06), “it is my wish to get a good education.”*



## Parnian Nazary

*(continued from page 4)*

Perhaps the most significant first has been the opportunity to speak openly. “Parnian was living in a culture in which women were not free to speak,” Hamilton points out. “She always knew her opinion mattered, but she didn’t feel free to express it. She’s becoming more outspoken. She realizes that she has something to say and a way of participating, not just as part of a group, but as a leader.”

Nazary had the opportunity to test these new skills this winter, when she was invited to address a conference at the United Nations. “I went to talk about my experience in the United States and with Seeds of Peace,” she says.

Her audience was a group of 500 international educators, and her topic was one she knows firsthand: the importance of listening to the other side of the story. “Parnian’s point was that although you’ve been given information about who ‘the other’ is, until you sit down and listen to them, you never really know what they’re like,” says Hamilton, who accompanied Nazary to New York. “She talked about the power of that experience.”

When she returns to Afghanistan, Nazary hopes to have just these kinds of experiences and to work for peace in a region that has known too little of it. “I’d love to do something for my country,” she says.

“She’s fiercely Afghan,” adds Hamilton. “She now can imagine being one of the people who will work toward bringing her country back to health.”

Nazary knows that road to recovery is likely to be a long one. “After the United States bombed my country, I thought, ‘We will have peace,’ but it was not true. There’s still war going on,” she observes somberly. But if her pursuit of an education has taught her one thing, it’s that persistence sometimes pays off. And, she adds poignantly, “what other choice do we have?”





BRIAN CROWLEY

## ALUMNI/AE EXPERTS ENLIVEN FACULTY STUDY-TOUR OF CHINA

Sixteen PEA faculty members have just returned from a three-week study tour of China, bringing with them firsthand insights into the historically rich, fast-evolving Asian nation. Sponsored by the Honolulu-based East-West Center, the trip came about through the efforts of former Exeter trustee Phil Loughlin '57, assisted by a host of alumni/ae, Exeter parents, grandparents and friends.

The strength of this PEA network was evident even before the faculty members left for China on June 21. On April 9, Loughlin and East-West Center staff members Elizabeth Buck and Dr. Linda Lindsey presented a daylong orientation session, with talks by Clifton Pannell '57, an associate dean at the University of Georgia, on "Chinese Geography," and by Dorinda Elliott '76, assistant managing editor of *Time* magazine in New York and a former Hong Kong bureau chief for *Newsweek*, on "Current Issues in China." Faculty members also heard from Harvard professor Philip Kuhn, who discussed the history of modern China.

In all, 18 different Exonians were scheduled to make presentations themselves or arrange field trips for the group, including David McCraw P'02, who gave a talk on Chinese literature during the group's stopover at the East-West Center in Honolulu. Once the group arrived in China, their itinerary included presentations in Beijing by Phyllis Chang '75 on citizens' rights and in Shanghai by Chris Choa '77 on that city's dramatic development boom. In all three cities, local Exeter alumni/ae associations planned receptions for the faculty, with Allen Wolff '80 doing the hosting in Honolulu, Chang and Mary Pei GP'06, GP'09 in Beijing and Ming Chen '85 in Shanghai.

Other scheduled speakers included Jonathan Woetzel, director in the Shanghai office of McKinsey & Company, who, at the request of trustee Leigh Bonney '76, planned to speak on business and economics and to set up a visit to the General Motors factory in Shanghai; and Stephen McGuinness P'02, P'05, the owner of a series of galleries specializing in avant-garde Chinese art, who arranged a gallery tour in Beijing. Scheduled field trips included a visit to a school for migrant women in Beijing, arranged by Phyllis Chang, and a one-day excursion to a farming community near Nanjing, arranged by Clifton Pannell.

Along with touring sites like the Great Wall, Longhua Temple and the Shanghai Museum, the teachers were to study subjects ranging from Chinese philosophy and religions to 20th-century Chinese history, from family and gender issues to Chinese literature, from traditional Chinese medicine to contemporary educational practices. The classes reinforced the fundamental purpose of the study tour: to enhance the Academy's curriculum and deepen the teachers' understanding of Exeter's Chinese and Chinese-American students and their backgrounds.

*Before they left for their three-week study tour of China, Exeter faculty took part in a daylong orientation session that included presentations by Harvard history professor Philip Kuhn (front row, third from left), Clifton Pannell '57 (fourth from left), an associate dean at the University of Georgia, and Dorinda Elliott '76 (fifth from left), assistant managing editor of Time magazine.*



## TABLE TALK WITH DAVID WALSH '05 AND ADELAIDE FULLER '05 | By Famebridge Witherspoon

Adelaide “Addy” Fuller ’05 and David Walsh ’05 didn’t look much different when they got back from their winter term in County Kilkenny, Ireland, site of the Academy’s newest off-campus program. But their 10 weeks with the Exeter-Ballytobin/Callan Program—which they spent living and working at a residential therapeutic farm for people with multiple disabilities co-founded by Exeter alumnus Patrick Lydon ’68 and his wife, Gladys—were, the pair agree, a conversion experience.

“When you spend time with people

side before, and what we were doing was hard farming work: turning the ground for planting, spreading compost, planting seeds, pulling weeds and picking vegetables. But it was work with a purpose, and it was good for me.”

Fuller was not new to working with people with special needs. Growing up, she spent a lot of time with a family friend who is autistic and grew to appreciate their relationship. Once at Exeter, she joined the Best Buddies Club (as did Walsh), which pairs PEA students with area youngsters who have special needs.

Fuller spent her afternoons at Ballytobin, a separate residential farm located nearby, working with three autistic girls, ages 8, 12 and 14, in the community’s art center.

Fuller grew especially attached to 8-year-old Kerry Jane and accompanied

her to movement class, where participants learn a form of therapeutic dance to build motor skills. At first, Fuller recalls,

Kerry Jane didn’t like the class and would only move a little. But over time, she

not only danced, she also mastered all the steps. “What made it so special for me was that Kerry Jane had this really great moment,” Fuller says.

Walsh says he also found the daily responsibilities challenging, and not just the physical labor. “Patrick Lydon calls it ‘life sharing’ and that’s what it is. When you live at the house you have to dive right in and deal with whatever is happening.”

Walsh bonded with a 24-year-old man, Eoghan, who has Down syndrome. “The people living there are so attentive to the littlest things around them,” Walsh says. “Eoghan, for example, greeted me every morning with a big hello and a warm hug. If I had the slightest mood change, he would notice and ask me what was wrong.”

Fuller and Walsh join a growing number of Exeter alumni/ae who have lived and worked at Ballytobin. But they are the first Academy students to earn academic credits for their work, which also included reading and writing assignments, and a final project once they returned to Exeter.

Both say they learned much from their time in Ireland. “This experience changed my attitude about a lot of things, including my desire for material things,” says Walsh. “It really makes you realize what’s important in life, because

FRED CARLSON



with special needs, you have to almost reinvent the way you listen and observe and perceive,” says Walsh, a three-year student from Tyngsboro, MA. “We learned so much more from the residents than they learned from us.”

“It was a wonderful experience because every day you felt the people around you were glad to see you,” says Fuller, a four-year student from Weybridge, VT. “It’s a simpler life. For example, all the food is prepared by hand, and a lot of that food is grown on the farm.”

Now in its first year, the Exeter-Ballytobin/Callan Program is open to two Academy seniors. The goal of the program, according to one of its creators, religion instructor Betsey Farnham, is to provide “an opportunity for students to learn in a very immediate way through living in close relationship with other people in a community that has at its heart service to others.”

Fuller and Walsh lived in the town of Callan, in two group homes known as “The Granary” and “The Workhouse,” respectively. Together with two administrators and other caregivers, they cooked, cleaned and worked with four adults with special needs. Some of their responsibilities took getting used to, says Fuller. “I’d never really worked hard out-

## DON BRISELDEN: A MASTER BUILDER MOVES ON

Don Briselden knows the Academy's classroom buildings and dormitories, its library and athletic facilities, its roads and paths, its forests and fields like the back of his hand. After all, as PEA's director of facilities management for the past 18 years, he has been responsible for overseeing all of them. This spring, as he prepared for the next phase of his life (Briselden is far too active a man to use the term retirement), he reflected on his time at Exeter and the ways in which the campus has evolved.

Since his arrival at the Academy in 1987, when the facilities management department was known as the physical plant, Briselden and his staff have worked on countless jobs that have changed not only the face of the campus but also the underpinnings. That ambitious slate of projects includes at least two master plans, four complete dormitory renovations and five major building or reconstruction projects: Saltonstall Boathouse, Forrester-Bowld Music Center, Phelps Science Center, Phillips Church and the Academy Center.

Briselden says there are numerous reasons why this work has engaged and challenged him. "High on the list of reasons has been my daily contact with the people of the Academy and with the facilities staff, who are exceptional professionals," he says. "I am thankful to the leadership of the school for providing me the opportunity to serve Exeter, and I extend a special thanks to all of the people in facilities management for their good team play, friendship and always responsive support."

While Briselden shows great enthusiasm for all of his projects, he singles out two for special mention: the construction of Phelps Science Center, which opened in 2001, and the development of a long-term management plan for the Academy Woods, which earned Exeter an Outstanding Tree Farm Award from the N.H. Tree Farm Program this year, in recognition of PEA's careful stewardship of its natural resources.



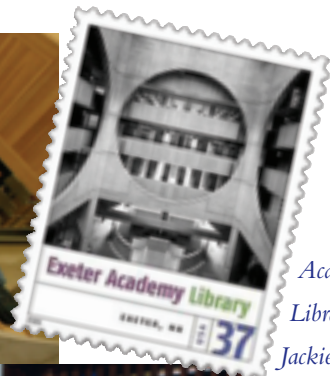
*During his 18 years as director of facilities management, Don Briselden oversaw five major building and reconstruction projects, including Phelps Science Center (rear).*



## LIBRARY STAMP UNVEILED

Jacquelyn Thomas, the Academy librarian and James H. Ottaway Jr. '55 Professor, was up extra early on the morning of May 20, and with good reason. She wanted to be first in line to purchase the U.S. Postal Service's newest set of commemorative stamps, "Masterworks of Modern American Architecture," which features a building Thomas knows well: the Academy's Class of 1945 Library. Designed by the architect Louis Kahn, the library was just one of just 12 buildings chosen for the series.

Later that same day, more than 200 people—including representatives of the U.S. Postal Service, members of the class of '55 (who were on campus to celebrate their 50th reunion), and students, faculty and staff—attended an official unveiling and second-day-of-issue ceremony in Michael Rockefeller '56 Hall, the soaring interior space depicted on the stamp. Robert Shapiro '68, president of the Friends of the Library, served as master of ceremonies, and speakers included Principal Ty Tingley and Academy Librarian Emeritus Rodney Armstrong.



*Academy Librarian Jackie Thomas (left) purchases a commemorative stamp featuring the Class of 1945 Library from Ken Guthrie (right) at the PEA Post Office.*



*A second-day-of-issue ceremony was held in Michael Rockefeller '56 Hall.*



RESEARCHING THE LIVES OF SARAH EMERY GILMAN AND ELIZABETH DENNETT HALE, THE WOMEN WHO WERE MARRIED TO THE ACADEMY'S FOUNDER, JOHN PHILLIPS.

During the course of writing *In a Man's World: Faculty Wives and Daughters at Phillips Exeter Academy, 1781–1981*, Connie Brown interviewed close to 100 women who called Exeter home at a time when the Academy was still a largely all-male institution. Her research made Brown curious about the lives of two Exeter women in particular: Sarah Emery Gilman (1701–1765) and Elizabeth Dennett Hale (1721–1797), the women who were married to the Academy's founder, John Phillips (1719–1795). "There is little or no personal correspondence and no diaries to substantiate how John and these women came to matrimony," says Brown, herself a former faculty wife (her husband is emeritus mathematics instructor Richard Brown). So she turned to colonial laws and probate records pertaining to women and their financial status as widows. Such documents, she says, "may give us some clues as to why John Phillips chose them to share his life and his life's work."

Phillips and his wives were born into a world of Puritan ideals whose strictness is legendary. Men and women married not necessarily because they loved one another, but because over time they might come to do so. Couples were exhorted to treat one another with respect, forming partnerships in which the husband was the head of the wife, and the wife the head of the household. It was the wife's responsibility to guide the household, but never her husband. She owed him an obedience founded on reverence; but at the same time, she was not his slave or servant.

Why Sarah and Elizabeth chose to marry not once, but twice, may have been a result of the educational practice of the time. Women were considered able to read scripture for their own edification and that of their children, and to balance the family budgets. However, they were deemed lacking the "strength of mind" for more serious intellectual pursuits. Few women successfully entered the role of *femme sole*, that is, a woman living on her own. Most women chose to be married, *femme covert*, a woman "covered," under the protection of a man.

When Phillips' cousin Nathanael Gilman died in 1741, his widow, Sarah Emery Gilman, who was then in her 40s, asked John, then in his 20s, to come board in her home and take care of the accounts. He had worked for her for two years when they were married in 1743. Both would know her dowry to be sizable, and that John, who had already established his business skills, would be responsible for the management of it.

When Sarah died in October 1765, she and John had been married for 22 years. She was 18 years older than John, a fact that seemed to matter little to them. In a letter preserved in the Academy Archives, John responded to a note from his step-granddaughter, Mrs. Josiah Gilman, in which he remembers Sarah in a way consistent with the Puritan ideal of a marriage partner—as some-

one he came to love.

In 1767, two years after Sarah's death, John, now in his 40s, married Elizabeth Dennett Hale, widow of Dr. Eliphalet Hale. Elizabeth's estate remained unsettled for five years after Eliphalet's death and three years after John and Elizabeth married. In the end much of it was used to satisfy creditors. Contrary to some accounts, Elizabeth was not a wealthy widow when John courted her.

John Phillips ran his merchant business, saw to the affairs of state, town and church, and, in 1781, formulated a constitution,

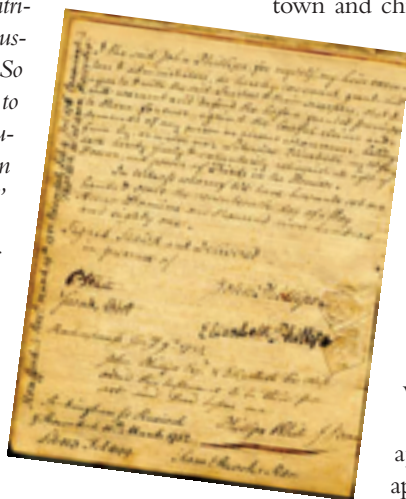
similar to Andover's, to guide those who served his new school, Phillips Exeter Academy. While Phillips was busy with the outside world, his wives were in charge of the household, the servants, entertaining and housewifely chores. Elizabeth would have had the responsibility of creating a pious but gracious atmosphere for those who came to call. In Charles H. Bell's *Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire: A Historical Sketch*, Elizabeth is described as a "prudent, helpful and devoted wife to Mr. Phillips."

When Phillips died in 1795, Elizabeth, who apparently had not seen her husband's will, appeared to be surprised by its provisions. He gave minor bequests to her and to his nephews. Of the remaining portion, two-thirds was left to Phillips Exeter Academy and one-third Phillips Andover Academy, where he was also a founder as well as a trustee. Elizabeth wrote a letter to the trustees of both schools within a month after Phillips died, protesting the provisions. The trustees apparently offered her some additions to her inheritance, which she, in a letter of May 22, accepted.

Elizabeth supplemented her income in much the same way faculty wives did in the 1800s. Soon after Phillips' death, Elizabeth submitted a bill for two students who boarded with her; subsequently, she also submitted a bill for catering a function for 28. The Academy Archives contain a bill from Jan-

uary 1797, the year of Elizabeth's death, for dinner and tea, costing £3.15. This was perhaps only one of many functions for which she received remuneration and which helped her live in a fashion she could tolerate.

The histories of Phillips Exeter Academy, early and late, make it clear that John Phillips was a frugal, stern and demanding Puritan on the one hand, and a generous, visionary philanthropist on the other. Behind him were two devoted women, Sarah and Elizabeth, who assisted him in his vision. One provided the inheritance upon which he built his empire. The other, though likely without goods, gave him a peaceful and well-run home, enabling him to be the merchant, philanthropist, politician and educator he was called to be. While we know little of Sarah and Elizabeth's lives, we are coming to understand and appreciate their legacy to the Academy.



No portraits survive of either Sarah or Elizabeth Phillips, and historical documents (including Elizabeth's signature on the *Deed of Gift*) are few. "But while we know little of their lives," says author Connie Brown, "we are coming to understand and appreciate their legacy to the Academy."

## SEEN AND HEARD ON CAMPUS

### VIJAY VISWANATHAN '03: REACHING OUT



Vijay Viswanathan '03, an experienced rock climber and white-water kayaker who was paralyzed as the result of a climbing accident during his freshman year at college, gave a powerful assembly talk on May 10. Viswanathan spoke

about the challenges paraplegics live with every day, and of his own efforts to resume some of his outdoor pursuits, including kayaking. "Everyone is different," he said, "yet everyone is the same. Disabled people are normal people. And like you, we want to just get on with our lives." Viswanathan's talk was sponsored by the Academy's Universal Access Committee, whose mission is not only to educate the PEA community about disability issues, but also to make buildings and landscaping more accessible to all. "Our goal," the Academy's trustees have stated, "is inclusion, not just compliance with regulation."

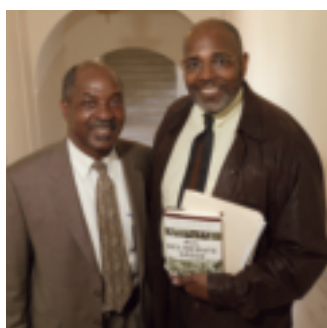
### ROBBINS MEMORIAL SYMPOSIUM— DEMOCRACY: FOR WHOM?



The 20th Annual Robbins Memorial Symposium brought four alumni/ae back to campus on April 25: (left to right) Gwen O'Donnell '90, a specialist in

health and childcare with Project Concern International; Gordon McCord '98, special assistant to Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and of the U.N. Millennium Project; Katherine Ward '83, deputy director of the International Crisis Group; and Tarek Khanachet '99, a teacher, archaeologist and activist. Their topic: the factors that undermine global democracy in the 21st century, including poverty, hunger, concerns about personal safety and social instability, and the legacy of colonialism. The symposium honors the late David Robbins '78, who researched, academically and through travel, the roots of poverty, famine and revolution.

### CHARLES OGLETREE—JUSTICE: BUT WHEN?



Speaking at assembly days after the 10th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, Harvard Law School professor Charles Ogletree (left, with Reverend Robert Thompson '72, right) recalled a similar but lesser-known tragedy: the 1921 Tulsa Race Riots, during which white vigilantes destroyed the black neighbor-

hood of Greenwood, killing several hundred residents and leaving an estimated 10,000 homeless. But unlike the Oklahoma City bombing, Ogletree said, the Tulsa riot faded quickly from public memory, the rioters went unprosecuted and their victims uncompensated. Only in recent years did the State of Oklahoma undertake a full-scale investigation of the riot, and Ogletree is now representing a group of aged survivors who are seeking reparations. "The Tulsa survivors don't want more justice or special justice," Ogletree told students. "They want equal justice under the law. If we can do it in Oklahoma City, we can do it in Tulsa."

### TED HOPE '80: A HIGHER GOAL

"The last time I stood on this stage, I ate a live goldfish," said independent film producer Ted Hope '80 at assembly on May 6.

In the years since, Hope has found bigger fish to fry, producing such critically acclaimed films as *21 Grams*, *The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *American Splendor*, *In the Bedroom* and *The Door in the Floor*. "When I was a student here," he said, "I felt like the most important thing I could do was get into the college of my choice." Only later, he added, when he had been "spit off the path of success," did he feel the freedom to explore what it was he really loved. "The filmmakers I admire are those who find a way to act on their passions and convictions, rather than pursuing security and conventional ideas of success. I would encourage you to do the same."

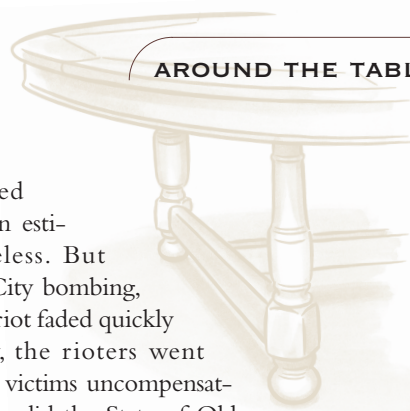


### P.J. O'ROURKE: THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT BEING TOO EARNEST



At his May 2 Assembly, political satirist P.J. O'Rourke offered students a lesson in the difference between "seriousness" and "earnestness." Political humor derives not "from the seriousness of the issue," he said, but from "how serious the person talking about the issue is." A one-time editor of *The National Lampoon*, O'Rourke said he finds ample humor in both the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as *The New York Times* and the N.H. presidential primary. O'Rourke is the author of 10 books, including *Parliament of Whores* and *Holidays in Hell*, and is a correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly* and the foreign affairs editor for *Rolling Stone*.

### AROUND THE TABLE





## Good Talk, Good Fuel, Good Food: Environmental Action at Exeter



Several alumni/ae who've made their careers in the environmental field returned to campus in early April to meet with students and discuss their work: (from left) Bruce Ferguson '72, P'05, president and CEO of Edenspace Systems, a Virginia company that uses plants to monitor and remove arsenic, lead, uranium and other minerals in soil and water, in commercial projects throughout the United States and Japan; Karin Rubin '91, a land protection specialist with Rockingham Land Trust in Exeter; Dorn Cox '91, who has launched the Oyster River Biodiesel Initiative, a coop focusing on the pro-

duction of biodiesel fuel, from his farm in Lee, NH; and Pat Leslie '97, Exeter's first environmental education fellow.

Following a year of study by the Academy's Environmental Task Force (ETF), Exeter's tractors began using biodiesel fuel this spring. A renewable fuel derived from cooking oils like soybean, biodiesel produces fewer harmful emissions than petrodiesel. Shown here with driver James Thomas (in cap) are ETF members (clockwise from top) recycling coordinator Danele Smith, associate director of facilities management Bob Kief, Elizabeth Shope '05 and Nick Devonshire '07.



Organic and locally grown foods were on the menu at a special Farm to School dinner co-hosted by the ETF and the Academy's Dining Services on May 11. Diners like Principal Ty Tingley had their choice of roasted sirloin with leek and shallot demiglace, rosemary fingerling potatoes, sautéed spinach and stuffed Roma tomatoes with Portobello mushrooms, and the chance to hear from the executive chef of Yale University Dining Services, which runs a popular organic dining hall, and from representatives from NH's Farm to School Program.



## TRUSTEE ROUNDUP

The Academy Trustees held their annual spring meeting on campus from May 18 to 21. The alumni/ae affairs and development committee announced that The Exeter Initiatives campaign had reached \$190 million toward its goal of \$305 million. (For more news of the campaign, including giving totals, see pages 58-60.) The trustees accepted the recommendations of the administration to name the new squash center the Fisher Squash Center and the new children's center the Harris Family Children's Center. In a separate action, the trustees approved going forward with the final design and construction of the Harris Family Children's Center beginning this summer. They also approved the final operating budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

The building and grounds committee reviewed an extensive list of projects and approved the capital budget for the coming fiscal year. After considering a number of plans that have been developed to replace the aging Cage with a new field house, the committee decided they were all too expensive to pursue at this time. At the conclusion of the buildings and grounds committee agenda, the president of the trustees, Jim Rogers '63, read a resolution honoring Facilities Management Director Don Briselden for his 18 years of dedicated service to the Academy.

The trustees also thanked instructor in religion Kathy Brownback, who ended her service as clerk of the trustees at this meeting and who becomes chair of the religion department this fall. Director of Studies Mark Delaney will replace Brownback as clerk. Finally, the trustees designated that Assistant Principal Thomas Hassan will serve with the title of acting principal while Principal Ty Tingley is on sabbatical during the fall and winter terms of the 2005-2006 academic year.

## LAMONT POETS CARL PHILLIPS AND BILLY COLLINS

AROUND THE TABLE



On April 20, Exeter welcomed **Carl Phillips** as the first of the Academy's two Lamont Poets. A finalist for the National Book Award for his seventh collection of poems, *The Rest of Love*, and the author of a recent volume of criticism, Phillips gave a public reading that night, and the next morning conducted a question-and-answer session in the Academy Library and visited an English class, where he talked with lowers about matters ranging from autobiography to poetic imagery to syntax. "I'm interested in the way the poem drives down the page," he told students, speaking about the innovative way he uses line-breaks. A poem "might start with something as simple as an observation," he explained, "a grackle, say, stepping into sunlight, or a bee banging itself against the window's glass. Then the reasoning animal, the human, the observer, steps in and begins to make sense."

—Todd Hearon

Well-known (and loved) for the humor that infuses even some of his most serious poems, **Billy Collins** has titled his upcoming book *The Trouble With Poetry*. But on January 26, Collins' troubles weren't with poetry, but with a major snowstorm that kept him from traveling to Exeter for his scheduled reading with the Lamont Poetry series. Fortunately, his visit was rescheduled and on May 4

the former U.S. Poet Laureate read to a large and appreciative audience from his work, including his collections *Nine Horses* and *Sailing Alone Around the Room*.

## HAPPY CAMPERS

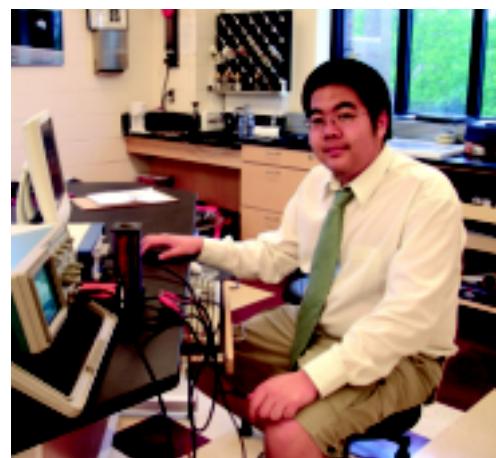
### EXETER STUDENTS SELECTED FOR PHYSICS OLYMPIAD TRAINING CAMP

Camp came early this year for three Exeter students who were chosen from more than 1,000 of the nation's top physics students to participate in the 2005 U.S. Physics Olympiad training camp. Yingyu "Daniel" Gao '08, of Hockessin, DE, Sherry Gong '07, of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Kevin Modzelewski '06, of Princeton, NJ, were among just 24 students selected for the prestigious weeklong training camp, based on their high scores on two national physics exams.

"This is the first time in the history of the Academy that three students—all underclassmen—were selected to participate in this program," says physics instructor Scott Saltman. "This is truly remarkable."

Held at the University of Maryland-College Park from May 14 to 21, the training camp prepared students to compete in the International Physics Olympiad. As part of their training, Gao and Gong conducted lab experiments, took exams and heard presentations from prominent scientists. And while neither was selected for the international team, they still enjoyed themselves thoroughly. "I had an awesome time," Gong says. "I met a lot of new people with whom I'm still in contact, and I learned a lot of physics, both in theory and in labs."

Adds Gao, "It was very challenging and there were lots of really



Three underclassmen qualified for the U.S. Physics Olympiad training camp this spring: (left) Kevin Modzelewski '06 and Sherry Gong '07, and (right) Daniel Gao '08. Modzelewski was also selected for the USA Computing Olympiad.

smart kids. But it wasn't a completely competitive atmosphere. We also played cards and threw Frisbees around."

Modzelewski, meanwhile, was something of a double medalist. He not only qualified for the U.S. Physics Olympiad camp, but also for a similar program for the country's top computer science students, the USA Computing Olympiad, and opted to attend the latter, held June 1 to 9 in Colorado Springs, CO.

"I enjoy physics, but I like computer science more," says Modzelewski. "When you have a problem in computer science, first you have to solve it and then you have to write that solution into the program."





## ... AN AWARD-WINNING FILM

In the spring of 2004, filmmaker Rick Rabe was commissioned to make a short film to premiere at the launch of The Exeter Initiatives fund-raising campaign. Rabe, whose credits include stints with Ogilvy & Mather and Merkley + Partners, is the founder of Big Leap, a company specializing in film and television production. After visiting campus and meeting with students and faculty, Rabe knew Exeter didn't need a traditional campaign film. Instead, he set out to make a film that would capture what Exeter means to individual Exonians.



*Robbie Campbell '04 is one of the many Exonians featured in a new short film about Exeter. To see the film, watch for an Exeter Initiatives event near you.*

The result is a sometimes funny, sometimes moving, very human statement about what Exeter is. In fact, the final segment of the film consists entirely of students, faculty, alumni/ae and parents describing what "Exeter is" to them. Brief interviews and archival footage of Academy life in former years are woven throughout the piece.

When the film premiered at the launch ceremony of The Exeter Initiatives on October 30, 2004, the audience found no statistics and no campaign graphs. What they did find was a portrait of their school—the vision and purpose behind The Exeter Initiatives. Over subsequent months, the film premiered regionally at campaign events around the country (see pages 58 and 59 for photos of the Chicago and Washington, D.C. events.)

Now the film has been awarded a grand gold medal by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) as the best all-around electronic media entry in CASE's annual Circle of Excellence Awards. The honor reflects not only Rabe's dedication to the project, but the dedication of hundreds of Exonians as well. "It's not sleight of hand that creates a good film," says Rabe, "it's the ability to distill, because the answers are already there if you really listen. When I came to the Academy, I heard that Exeter is complex: a place where every voice matters and every person is committed to the cause. This was a wonderful project for me because everyone spoke so truthfully and cared so passionately about Exeter."

## EXETER'S CAPITAL GANG

As part of the Washington Intern Program, 16 Exeter seniors spent their spring term working on Capitol Hill, under the guidance of program director and history department chair Rick Schubart (front). First row, from left: Laura Gray, who interned in the



office of Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT); Alec Johnson, Rep. John McHugh (R-NY); Yuqiao Huang, Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA); Jo Xu, Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD); Jessica Diehl, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX); Xin He, Rep. David Wu (D-OR); Shanique Kerr, Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL); Maya Rudolph, Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-CT). Second row: Reilly Leith, Sen. Judd Gregg '64 (R-NH); Hillary Braun, Sen. Lincoln Chaffee (R-RI). Third row: Angelica Nieraras, Sen. Jay Rockefeller '54 (D-WV); Josh Bechtold, Sen. John Sununu (R-NH); Matt Smallcomb, Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT); Pat Collins, Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI); Kevin Liptak, Sen. Judd Gregg '64 (R-NH); Isaac Wood, Sen. John Kerry (D-MA).

## Music to His Ears

**Composer/lyricist Adam Guettel '83, one of the Exonians featured in the new Exeter film, collected a few awards himself this spring. Guettel's new musical, *The***



Guettel

***Light in the Piazza*, won a total of six Tony Awards in June. Guettel received two Tonys, one for best score and the other (which he shared with collaborators Ted Sperling and Bruce Coughlin) for best orchestrations. *The Light in the Piazza* is playing through January 1, 2006, at New York's Lincoln Center Theater.**

## EXONIANA DO YOU REMEMBER?

Can you identify anyone in the mystery photo, or tell us when and where this dance was held? Stories about this and other memorable proms and dances are most welcome and will be published in the next issue. Mail to Exoniana, c/o The Exeter Bulletin, Phillips Exeter Academy, Communications Office, 20 Main Street, Exeter, NH 03833.



### ANSWER TO THE LAST ISSUE:

Exonians identified instructor in religion Peter Vorkink's classroom, whose intriguing Harkness table not only introduced students to a variety of religious artifacts and "toys" but also helped inspire many stimulating discussions.

### AND THE WINNER IS:

**MEGAN BLOCKER '97** New York, NY, who received an engraved Phillips Exeter Academy Cross pen. "This is definitely Mr. Vorkink's classroom! I took three classes with him, and he was a huge part of the reason I ended up majoring in religious studies at Bryn Mawr College. My favorite of his 'toys' was the Zen rock garden. Best of all was how they appeared—one by one over the course of each term."

#### A BOOK-LINED STUDY

This is Mr. Vorkink's classroom in the Academy Building. I had the great pleasure of taking three classes with Mr. Vorkink, primarily because he's an excel-



Religion instructor Peter Vorkink

lent teacher. The "toys" were a bonus. His classroom was my first encounter with a Zen garden (mini or otherwise). In my senior spring we had a Religion 490 class, in which we covered a lot of philosophy (our book was entitled *From Plato to Nietzsche*, so you can imagine). Towards the end of term, Mr. Vorkink invited us to his house for dinner, and we got to see his study. I can only aspire to someday own half as many far-ranging books and to be able to say I've read them all.

Caitlin Riley '96  
New York, NY

#### BALANCING MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT

It's the Harkness table of the incomparable Peter Vorkink. His classroom was a place where enlightenment seemed always just within reach. On his table were prayer wheels, Buddha statues, calligraphy sets and other objects acquired during his travels in the East, and we were always encouraged to pick them up and "play" with them during class. I remember a statue of a monkey in deep contemplation of a human skull, in

the attitude of Rodin's *Thinker*. A student with a sense of humor had written the words "Godot was here..." across its back with Wite-Out. Another favorite was the miniature Japanese rock garden, complete with sand and rake, which we all fought for at the start of class.

Lydia Peelle '96  
Charlottesville, VA

Editor's note: Congratulations to Lydia Peelle '96 for winning the second prize.

#### INSCRIPTION ENCORE

It was particularly satisfying to read the variety of responses to my challenge to identify the inscription over the south door of the Academy Building (HUC VENITE PUERI UT VIRI SITIS). I would note, however, that the second prizewinner was grievously in error when he described that invitation as "blatantly sexist." It is not—nor ever was. He, like most of my fellow alumni/ae, failed to notice that, instead of destroying the plaque when Exeter became coeducational, the Academy ingeniously added the dates when it was for "pueri" only (1781–1970) in the lower corners of the plaque and commissioned the Exoniana's extra-credit inscription (HIC QUAERITE PUERI PUELLAEQUE VIRTUTEM ET SCIENTIAM) to acknowledge the presence of "puellae."

Another example of why it is important to read not just the small print but *all* the print.

George H. Hanford '37  
Cambridge, MA

## TWO CONTEST WINNERS EVERY TIME!

There will be two prizes awarded for the correct answer to the Exoniana contest. One prize will be for the first correct answer received via delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. The rest of the correct answers will be placed into a drawing and one winner will be chosen at random.



## RESCUED FROM THE REICH | By Betsey Farnham

Bryan Mark Rigg '91, author of *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers*, has done it again. His second book, *Rescued from the Reich: How One of Hitler's Soldiers Saved the Lubavitcher Rebbe* (Yale University Press, 2004), presents the riveting story of the little-known and unlikely rescue of the leader of a group of Hasidic Jews from German-occupied Warsaw in December 1939. As if that were not surprising enough, the leader of the rescue operation, Ernst Bloch, was both a decorated soldier in the German Army and half-Jewish.

Rigg's book reads like a detective story; his considerable research and numerous interviews allow him to take his reader almost day by day from the early concern of American Lubavitchers about their leader's safety to the Rebbe's arrival in America in March 1940. Along the way, he writes of the efforts of highly placed members of the Roosevelt administration as well as those of equally influential members of Hitler's government, without whose assistance the rescue could not have taken place.

The branch of Hasidic Jews called Lubavitchers came from the town of Lubavitch in Byelorussia. Hasidim (Hebrew for "pious ones") are the followers of the Baal Shem Tov, an 18th-century teacher who held that Judaism should involve the hearts and souls as well as the minds of its believers. By the 20th century, the Lubavitch movement had tens of thousands of followers in Europe and the United States. Their Rebbe, Joseph Isaac Schneersohn, had a very close relationship with his followers and acted as an intermediary between his people and God.

Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and the Rebbe and his followers were soon trapped in Warsaw. Nazi bom-

bardment of Warsaw was extensive, and Schneersohn, who hoped to move on to Latvia, was unable to leave the city. He and his followers celebrated the High Holy Days while German bombs exploded all around them. On September 28, Warsaw capitulated to the Nazis. Although the Rebbe could not leave, his

followers hoped the Germans would believe he had been killed in the bombing and would not try to find him.

Meanwhile, the Rebbe's American followers were pressuring the U.S. government to help rescue him. Secretary of State Cordell Hull, whose wife's father was Jewish, was asked to help locate the Rebbe. Justice Louis Brandeis spoke to Attorney General Benjamin Cohen, asking him whether he could determine whether the Rebbe was safe. Cohen, in turn, contacted

Robert Pell, assistant chief of the State Department's European Affairs Division, who was in touch with influential German officials; he in turn contacted Helmut Wohlthat, chief administrator of Goering's Four Year Plan and a Nazi Party member, and asked for help. Pell also wrote the American consul general in Berlin, who contacted Wohlthat directly and promised "the absolute discretion of the American State Department," aware, as he was, of the risk involved in such activity. Rigg explains, "U.S. relations with Germany had remained strained as a result of Hitler's persecution of Jews and his invasions of Czechoslovakia and Poland. Wohlthat therefore welcomed an opportunity to restore a modicum of goodwill between the two nations." He met with

Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Abwehr, and told him of the case. Canaris, who disapproved of much that Hitler was doing and later participated in several coup attempts, ordered Major Ernst Bloch to carry out the rescue.

The rescue involved considerable difficulties. If Bloch had the good luck to find out where the Rebbe was living, how could he, a German, persuade the Lubavitchers that he wanted to save the Rebbe? Meanwhile, in America the Rebbe's followers had started the difficult process necessary for obtaining a visa for him and his family and close followers, but it had to be proven to the U.S. Immigration Service and the State Department that the Rebbe and his group were rabbis and therefore "professors" of Jewish theology who could find employment in America as teachers.

Near the end of November, new information passed on to Bloch finally led him to the building where the Rebbe was living. By this time, Rigg says, the Rebbe may also have learned that Bloch had been instructed to find him and could be trusted. The news was passed on to Washington, yet Bloch needed to figure out a safe way to get Schneersohn out of Warsaw and the Rebbe and his group still needed visas to enter the United States.

Bloch managed to get a truck and a wagon to take the Lubavitchers to a railroad station outside of Warsaw. There they would travel by train to Berlin and then go on to Riga, the capital of Latvia. Despite difficulties at a number of checkpoints, the Lubavitchers arrived in Berlin in the middle of December and the following day boarded a train for Riga.

The visa question was not solved so easily, and Rigg skillfully guides readers through the maze that was the immigration process in a period when the State Department's "indifference and hostility to Jewish immigrants" made the securing of a visa difficult, if not impossible. The lawyer hired by the Lubavitchers in America argued that the Immigration Act of 1924 would define the Rebbe and his rabbis as "clergymen," a non-quota status. In early January, the lawyer received word that visas would be issued to

the Rebbe and his followers, enabling them to fly from Riga to Stockholm and then travel to Goteborg from where they could sail to America.

The Lubavitchers were fortunate indeed. By the middle of 1940, Breckinridge Long, the State Department official appointed earlier that year to oversee immigrant visas, had tightened policies to such an extent that thousands and thousands of refugees from Hitler's Europe were prevented from coming to this country. "In summer 1942," Rigg writes, "when the opportunity arose to rescue 5,000 orphaned Jewish children stuck in Vichy France, Long actively prevented it. Even though Eleanor Roosevelt pushed hard for their rescue, Long's efforts delayed the action so long that, before any of the children could leave, the Germans sent most of them to their death in the East."

After a harrowing trip across the Atlantic, the Rebbe, his family and followers arrived in New York in March 1940. The Rebbe had been fortunate to have American help; most of the Hasidic leaders in Eastern Europe died in the Holocaust. The Rebbe thanked the members of the administration who had made his escape possible and worked to rescue other Lubavitchers. When it became clear that this would not happen, he focused his attention on the spiritual rescue of the Jews.

Rigg does a superb job helping us understand the Rebbe himself. He believed that the Holocaust was God's punishment of the Jews for not having been faithful enough; no efforts by any government to rescue Jews from the Nazis could take the place



*Alumni/ae are urged to advise the Exonians in Review editor of their own publications, recordings, films, etc., in any field, and those of classmates. Whenever possible, authors and composers are encouraged to send one copy of their books and original copies of articles to Edouard Desrochers '45 (Hon.), the editor of Exonians in Review, Phillips Exeter Academy, 20 Main Street, Exeter, NH 03833. Alumni/ae interested in reviewing works by fellow Exonians are also encouraged to contact the editor at the same address, or by email at edesrochers@exeter.edu.*

### ALUMNI/AE

**1948—Thayer Scudder.** *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing With Social, Environmental, Institutional and Political Costs.* (Earthscan Publications, 2005)

**1957—John M. Cooper.** *Knowledge, Nature, and the Good: Essays on Ancient Philosophy.* (Princeton University Press, 2004)

**1959—Nicholas White.** *Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics.* [paperback] (Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 2004)

**1961—Robert J. Littman** and Naomi Pasachoff. *A Concise History of the Jewish People.* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005)

**1965—Robert M. Wallace.** *Hegel's Philosophy of Reality, Freedom and God.* (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

**1969—Robert Rubin.** *Jean Prouvé: A Tropical House.* [exhibition catalog with foreword by Robert A.M. Stern] (Yale School of Architecture, 2005)

**1973—Anthony Robinson.** [co-editor and publisher] *Transformation: A Journal of Literature, Ideas & the Arts.* [first issue] (Winter 2005)

**1975—Walter Stahr.** *John Jay: Founding Father.* (Hambledon and London, 2005)

**1978—Tripp Friedler.** *Free Gulliver: Six Swift Lessons in Life Planning.* (Trost Publishing, 2005)

**1985—Gregory D. S. Anderson.** *Language Contact in South-Central Siberia.* (Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005)

**1985—Mi-Kyoung Lee.** *Epistemology After Protagoras: Responses to Relativism in Plato, Aristotle, and Democritus.* (Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 2005)

**1987—Patrick O'Donnell.** *The Knights Next Door: Everyday People Living Middle Ages Dreams.* (iUniverse, Inc., 2005)

### BRIEFLY NOTED

**1973—Chip Marvin.** "Getting to Yes" IN *Transformation: A Journal of Literature, Ideas & the Arts.* (Winter, 2005).

**1981—Claudia Putnam.** "Traces" [poem] IN *Artful Dodge.* (v. 46/47, 2005)

———. "Book of the Equinox" [poem] IN *Flint Hills Review.* (v. 9/10, 2005)

**1988—Jim Bowley.** "Maximizing Performance: Technology Can Play an Important Role When Organizations Adopt a Pay-for-Performance Strategy" IN *Human Resource Executive Magazine.* (April, 2005)

### FACULTY

**L. Todd Hearon.** "To a Nightingale," "Appalachian Lullaby," and "Chamber Music" [poems] IN *The Southern Review.* (Spring 2005, v. 41, no. 2)

———. "Banjo" and "South Carolina" [poems] IN *AGNI.* (Issue 62)

### FORMER BENNETT FELLOW

**Katherine Towler.** *Evening Ferry: A Novel.* (MacAdam/Cage, 2005)

of renewed worship and faith. His highest priority was to preach "the beginning of the 'final struggle' that would usher in the redemption of the nation of Israel"; the coming of the Messiah was at hand.

In my class on the Holocaust, we always listen to a tape of an Auschwitz survivor who reminds us that no one is all evil or all good. Events in the world take place, Joli Zeleni says, because each of us makes his or her own moral choices. Bryan Rigg's *Rescued from the Reich* shows us in extraordinary detail how

Rebbe Schneersohn survived the Holocaust because of a good deal of luck and because of the actions of many individuals on both sides of the Atlantic who, in a dangerous time, made their own moral choices to help him. ■

*Religion instructor Betsey Farnham has been a member of the Exeter faculty since 1987. Her course is The Holocaust: The Human Capacity for Good and Evil.*



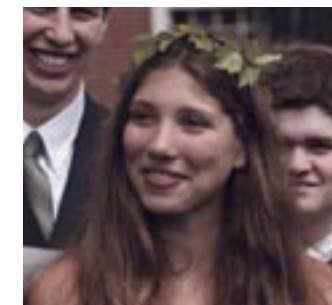


**A**нна Consla steps forward to receive her diploma from Principal Ty Tingley at the June 12 Commencement ceremony. Opposite page, from left: A.J. Pandher; Aaron Gadson and Uthman Arogundade; Eva Glasrud; Allison Pennock.

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**Commencement  
address by  
Principal  
Ty Tingley '48, '64,  
'01 (Hon.), P'99**

**W**hen a REPORTER FROM THE *EXONIAN* asked me a few weeks ago in what areas outside of academics I thought the class of 2005 had distinguished itself, I quickly responded, "Community service and politics." In giving such a glib response I did the class some disservice, because this class has distinguished itself in every way during your time at Exeter. Your accomplishments in the classroom have been impressive, even by this old school's high standards. Your accomplishments athletically have also been remarkable, as the 16 New England championships won by Exeter teams during your upper and senior years attest. And your accomplishments in the arts have been superb, as your concerts and Music 500 recitals, your dramatic productions, and your visual art on display in the



**Photographs by Brian Crowley**





**For the graduates and their families, it was a day filled with emotion. Above, from left: Charles Wilson; an Exonian reader; Erika Perez; Davis Moore. Opposite page, clockwise from left: Lois Beckett; a younger brother watches closely; Class Marshals Shanique Kerr and Beau Trudell lead their classmates into graduation.**

gallery these past few weeks all demonstrate. You've produced a wonderful weekly newspaper and an exceptional yearbook. There are no areas in which you've let down or failed to achieve at the highest level.

But in community service and political activism you have shown a special spark, and I wonder if you were cast upon that course by the difficult moment in which your class began its high school career. For the 155 who are four-year seniors, the day that started your time at Exeter was September 11, 2001. For those who began high school elsewhere, while the exact day of your beginning may have been different, the times were no less turbulent. Let's go back in time for a moment.

New students arrived in Exeter on September 11, 2001, to find a glorious, sunny, early fall day. By 9 a.m. I could hear the sounds of students and families going through the registration process in the Academic Quad outside my window. As the morning unfolded and it became clear that an unprecedented terrorist attack was underway, my focus shifted to a very different opening of school from what we had planned. Would parents be willing to leave their daughters and sons at school with such awful events taking place? Should we postpone classes with so many students finding it difficult to get to Exeter? What should we do with all of the parents who had traveled to Exeter with their children by airplane and now found they could not get home?

As you remember, we found answers to all those questions and started the school year on time. Families made Herculean efforts to deliver their students to Exeter and then made Herculean efforts to make their way home. While it took a few days for everyone to arrive, the class of 2005 started on time with its full complement of students.

We marched into the Assembly Hall in silence in honor of those who had lost their lives, and breathed a sigh of relief that no parents or current students were lost. Only later did we learn that three alumni had died in the

collapse of the World Trade Center towers.

I think it is too early to know if the events of that terrible day really gave the class of 2005 any special inspiration. We will have to look to your biographies—shortly to be published, I'm sure—to see how you feel the events of that day affected you. But setting inspiration aside, all the members of the class of 2005 have gone through high school in a world materially different from the one that previous classes experienced, and the issues you will confront in your lives after Exeter have been dramatically shaped by the events that marked the beginning of your high school careers.

And it is significant of your spirit and character that your reaction to such terrible events has largely been one of compassion and constructive action.

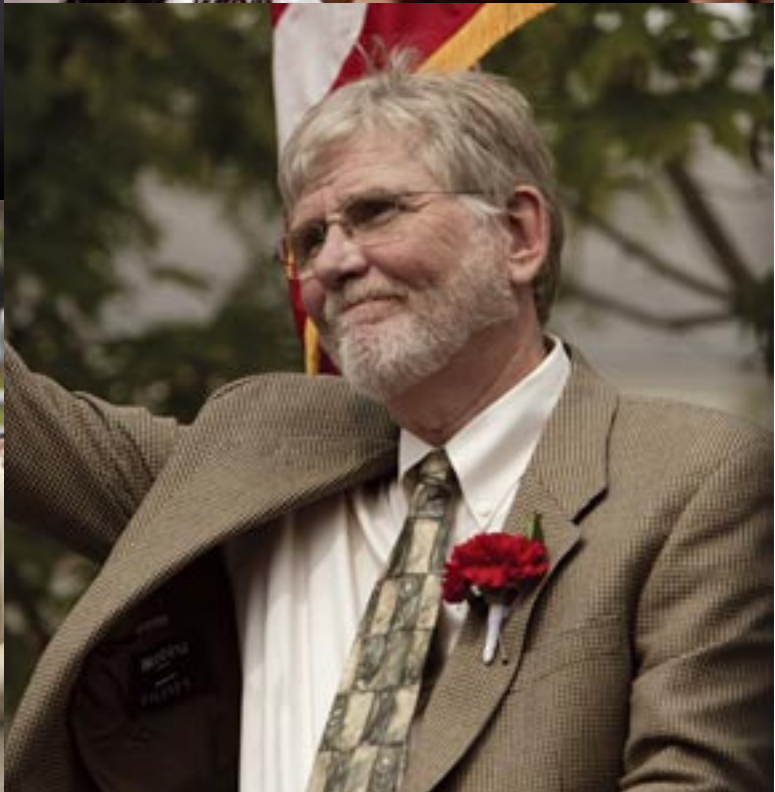
International political issues immediately moved to the front of the stage during your time at the Academy. When the invasion of Iraq was under consideration, we saw the first significant antiwar activism on this campus since the 1970s. And there were opinions on both sides of the question. Liberals and conservatives, hawks and doves lined up on both sides of the issues, and there were battles on the *Exonian's* op-ed page. There were teach-ins and debates in many venues. Many of the members of the class of 2005 squeezed themselves into the Assembly Hall during January 2004 to hear the presidential candidates. For many, their political activism continued to build through the summer and fall as the national election approached. Again, there were strong voices on each side of the issues and strong voices for each party. And as your senior year approached, an unusual number of the class of 2005 sought the Washington Intern Program and the heady political environment of the nation's capital.

In a similar fashion, this class has always been significantly involved in community service. The notion of *non sibi* runs deeply in this class, and nowhere was that more evident than in the response of ESSO leaders to the Asian tsunami

(continued on page 22)







## ‘ *The Real Test Is Tomorrow* ’

By Kirk Bansak '05

*In his commencement address, senior class president Kirk Bansak spoke about the challenge of summing up exactly “what Phillips Exeter has been to us and what it has given to us,” and about the mix of anticipation and anxiety that the class of 2005 and their families might be feeling about life after Exeter. “But let me encourage all to have faith,” Bansak said. “Have faith in the Exonians who are sitting here today. Have faith in all that Exeter has taught us. Have faith in Exeter.” Excerpts from his remarks follow here.*

**F**rom Day One, Exeter has pushed us to the limits of our being, urged us to make use of all of the vast resources that the school has to offer and all of the vast resources we can find in ourselves. As you know all too well from our stressed-out voices during telephone calls and curt, crabby emails, life at Exeter can be extremely demanding. We have read much and we have discussed much around our Harkness tables, but more than anything, we have been challenged to think. Every day we have been challenged to think.

At Exeter, the responsibility to learn and understand things is placed on each individual and there is no hiding around the Harkness Table; we are taught to be individuals through our academics, our extracurricular activities, our interaction with the diversity on campus, our time in the Assembly Hall. Exeter is not isolated from the outside world, and assembly has connected our lives to others' beyond this school. Politically, socially, spiritually, metaphysically and religiously we have been pushed in assembly to apply our lives to the outside world, to think of our place as humans on this earth, and note that this year's seniors across the country have spent their entire four-year high school careers in the post-September 11 world. Exeter has constantly challenged us to think of the implications of that event, and of every noteworthy event in the past four years.

Exeter has—some of us might admit—been mentally exhausting. And as much as we sometimes dreaded the trials of the classroom (especially under the warm covers of our bed listening to the alarm clock go off at 7:55 a.m., five minutes before the first class), this is exactly why we can all have faith in Exeter. It is important to recognize what a unique relationship exists between all of us as seniors and Exeter, and what an accomplishment it is for us to be here today.

Our time here was an unceasing test. Today, we have all passed. We have all proven that we can live a life of consequence because Exeter is an environment with consequences of every kind and at every turn. It is through toil, difficulty, responsibility, and how one meets those things that self-discovery is possible, and Exeter has given us ample opportunities for self-discovery. Through all of the hard work, countless hours and continuous energy we have put into Exeter, through all of the conflict, pressure and toil that we have encountered, Exeter has made us into a stronger, more refined substance. We have been shown how to be solid individuals and citizens of the world.

But of course, having attended Exeter is certainly not a free ticket to all our desires. Just having been here is not enough. The real test is tomorrow. This is the process by which we incorporate everything that we have learned at Exeter into our lives beyond Exeter. Goodness and knowledge, *non sibi* and all that we have acquired in the classroom—we must now work toward applying the disciplined, high-minded ideals of this institution into the actions of our future. And of course, this is where the past, present and future all fuse into one, this is why I can now look upon today without being intimidated. There is much to be done in the future, we know, but we do not need to worry about it because Exeter has given us everything we need for success in the future.

As I was walking past the new student center the other day and marveling at the wonderful leisure it will give future classes of Exonians, I realized something. Although the construction is not done now, I know it will be done. And I know it will be amazing, because all the resources necessary to make such a creation possible have been put in. Before anything occurs, there must be foundations. What is seated here before you, ladies and gentlemen, is the foundation for a bright future. We have learned the true meaning of ambitions and the energy and sincerity by which we must pursue those ambitions.

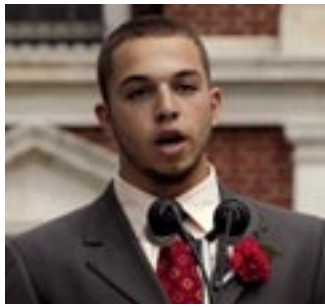
Seated here before you is our foundation, our own work in progress. In each and every one of us is the past, present and future, united by this concept into one continual process of development and creation. Welcome to our world. This is the core of the Exeter experience.

For the full text of Kirk Bansak's speech, go to <http://phillips.exeter.edu/classof/2005>



**Senior class president Kirk Bansak (above) delivers his commencement address. Opposite page, clockwise from top: Several thousand family members and friends fill the Academy lawn; Lillian Chen embraces a classmate; retiring English instructor William Hagen; graduate Alex Gorodetsky with sister Olga '02 and parents Leon and Tatyana Gorodetsky; Principal Tingley.**





**Above, from left: Anne McGuinness; Thais Brown; Javier Rodriguez; Zeyad Ali delivers the invocation. Opposite page, clockwise from upper left: For only the second time in the Academy's history, two seniors—Heather Carmichael (left) and Jonathan Wing (right)—shared the Faculty Prize for Excellence. Assisting Principal Tingley with the presentation of diplomas are Aba Osseo-Assare and David Baratta.**

*(continued from page 18)*

this past winter. An astounding number of you made a personal commitment to this effort and as a community you raised more than \$21,000 to help the thousands whose lives and livelihoods had been destroyed by geological forces beyond human control.

And at a deeper level, the events of September 11 have forced you to participate in a dialogue which is unlike the experience of any other class at Exeter. All of us awoke on September 12, 2001, to a war on terror. As a nation the United States became suspicious of whole new groups of people and began devising defenses against them. Some of these people were your friends, and your friends-to-be, at Exeter.

I remember standing in the Assembly Hall on the evening of September 11. We canceled the usual ice cream social in my backyard that night so we could have a meeting of the entire school community. There were lots of parents there, as well as many staff members who don't normally attend assembly. I began to read a short digest of the day's news, just to make sure that everybody was hearing the same story. In times of disaster rumors fly. But what I was thinking about throughout that assembly was how to make sure that our community didn't take out the anger and shock felt that day on those Exonians who came from the Middle East, or were Muslim, or had some connection to a part of the world that was now under a cloud of suspicion.

Knowing you as I know you now, I shouldn't have worried. And we should also recognize the classes of 2002, 2003 and 2004 for their leadership of the school in these difficult times. It is clear that what has emerged during your time in this diverse community is a respect for dialogue and an understanding that by talking about issues of great public matter or great personal consequence, human beings come to an understanding of one another.

I was not fully aware of just how difficult the journey was for this class until I heard your meditations. All of us who teach at Exeter look forward to the senior meditations each spring

## Graduation Prizes

**The Yale Cup**, awarded each year to the member of the senior class who best combines the highest standards of character and leadership with excellence in his studies and in athletics:

**Kirk Bansak, Scottsdale, AZ**

**The Ruth and Paul Sadler '23 Cup**, awarded each year to that member of the senior class who best combines the highest standards of character and leadership with excellence in her studies and in athletics:

**Kendall Reiley, Marblehead, MA**

**The Perry Cup**, given annually to a student who has shown outstanding qualities of leadership and school spirit:

**David Baratta, Pennsauken, NJ**

**The Williams Cup**, given annually to a student who, having been in the Academy four years, has by personal qualities brought distinction to Phillips Exeter:

**Gordon Powers, East Kingston, NH**

**The Eskie Clark Award**, given to a student in the graduating class who, through hard work and perseverance, has excelled in both athletics and scholarship:

**Peteris Liepins, Boxford, MA**

**The Thomas Cornell Award**, decided by the senior class and given annually to that member of the graduating class who exemplifies the Exeter Spirit typified by Thomas Hilary Cornell of the Class of 1911:

**Lois Beckett, Rochester, NY**

**Cox Medals**, awarded each year to those members of the graduating class who, having been two or more years in the Academy, have attained the highest scholastic rank:

**Kirk Bansak, Scottsdale, AZ**

**Lois Beckett, Rochester, NY**

**Heather Carmichael, Weston, MA**

**Gordon Powers, East Kingston, NH**

**Jonathan Wing, Fort Myers, FL**

**Faculty Prize for Excellence**, given for only the second time in Academy history to two members of the graduating class who, having been two or more years in the Academy, are recognized on the basis of scholarship as both holding the first rank:

**Heather Carmichael, Weston, MA**

**Jonathan Wing, Fort Myers, FL**







because they remind us of what a privilege it is to watch your minds grow and to watch the awakening of wisdom. A number of your meditations touched upon similar themes: the difficulty of Jews trusting Muslims and of Muslims trusting Jews, the pain of being an outsider in a suspicious culture and the pain of seeing the effect of that suspicion on your friends, and the transformative effect of caring for others, especially others profoundly disabled in body and mind. These are themes the world has forced upon you, and I think it unlikely that you anticipated them as a part of your high school experience.

And your meditations revealed that despite the dramatic change in the emotional and political landscape on September 11, this class has developed attitudes and values that will help all of us in the years ahead. Though the conversations have been difficult at times, you have made progress toward understanding and toward an appreciation of the power that lies in seeing the differences humans manifest as a potential strength, not a weakness.

On the night of the Falafel Ball I received a long email from a faculty member who had attended. After describing the rich diversity of costumes, ethnicities and dancing styles that crowded the dance floor, the email concluded with this paragraph:

*"I found myself wondering how many places in America, how many organizations or institutions of learning and culture, could match this scene or offer to people what this event offered to our students tonight. In how many places in America can you find a true celebration of even one culture of the Middle East—let alone such a holistic and deeply pluralistic celebration, Christians and Jews and Muslims together? Where can young people struggling to understand the complex issues of the present gather together to learn from each other and build a community in which they can all live comfortably, without denial or avoidance, but with an abundance of respect and goodwill? Where they can ask the hard questions and say the things that hurt and then dance together? I don't know of anyplace else that can claim this."*

In other times of great world and national

stress, Exeter has attained such moments of peace. In earlier generations, however, it was often a result of our isolation, as *A Separate Peace*, the novel by John Knowles '45 describes. In the Exeter of that novel, the boys were able to carry through World War II, much as they always had, with little acknowledgement of the calamity that engulfed the world. In the case of the class of 2005, it seems that some of our highest moments have been attained when we have been engaged, not isolated; when we have been in dialogue, not maintaining a distant silence. Perhaps one of you will write the next generation's sequel to *A Separate Peace* and document this change.

Exeter is a school so steeped in history that as soon as a class graduates, its members begin to wonder what their legacy will be. You see this at our Founder's Day assembly where the 50th reunion class always refers to itself as the "great" class of whatever year. You too will be the great class of 2005.

But I think your legacy will not be as simple as your remarkable support for a class gift, nor the good leadership you have demonstrated as a class, nor future acts of generosity and support. You have sown the seeds of an important legacy by learning from the fated days in which you began your high school years and focusing on the possibility of tomorrow. It may be an overstatement to see in the Falafel Ball the signs of a new age, but it is not overstatement to say that in your few short years at Exeter, you have become accomplished in living in a diverse community and eager to engage in dialogue about the most important issues in our world. May you carry on this journey and contribute to the growth of world peace.

It was hard to imagine this day as I walked around in the Academic Quad four years ago on September 11, 2001. All of you have persevered in the face of troubled times and have grown in wisdom and compassion. Hard times often provoke great leadership and this has been the way of the class of 2005. The world has never more needed your talents. ■

**Above, from left: English instructor Mercy Carbonell; Shay Willard and Leslie Moclock; Shani Boianjiu; Kalim Kassam. Opposite page, clockwise from upper left: graduate Aisha Kazeem and her parents Titilayo and Saka Kazeem with Reverend Bob Thompson '72; graduate Jamie Rogers and his father, Jim Rogers '63, president of the Academy Trustees; Sophia Bachilova takes a final look at the Exonian.**



**Depending on how you look at it, all 302 members of the class of 2005 covered a considerable distance during their time at Exeter. For some, that distance was geographical; for others, it was intellectual, emotional or spiritual. Here, the journeys of four graduating seniors, each of whom came a long way.**

By Susannah Clark '84

Photographs by  
Brian Crowley



**Even with significant hearing and speech impairments, Gordy Powers quickly emerged as one of the top students in his class, as well as an inspiration to his classmates and teachers.**

## G o r d o n P o w e r s ' 0 5 *A F a i r H e a r i n g*

Students at Exeter come in just about every variation, but Gordon Powers, a day student from East Kingston, NH, was unique when he started four years ago. Powers wears two hearing aids—even so, he doesn't always catch everything—and due to a muscular disorder, his speech can be difficult to understand. In a school where academics are based in a very large part on discussion, significant hearing and speech impairments might seem like insurmountable obstacles. "I actually wasn't accepted right away," Powers says.

But as Exeter was soon to discover, Powers is nothing if not determined. "Because the classes are so small, I felt that Exeter would be fine for me," he says. So he set about convincing the school.

"There are not a lot of kids with physical disabilities here," observes his senior year adviser, Assistant Principal Tom Hassan, who was dean of admissions at the time of Powers' application. "The admissions committee took extra time and care in considering Gordy's case. In the end, the committee was convinced that Gordy would succeed, as well as add a new dimension to the Academy's 'youth from every quarter.'"

Math instructor Dave Arnold, who was Powers' adviser for his first three years, is forthcoming about his initial concerns. "Frankly, I was nervous as all hell," he confesses. "All Gordy's classes were going to be oral-based. How threatening would that be for anybody, let alone someone with hearing and speech disabilities? He didn't really know." Arnold's concerns didn't take long to fade. "Halfway through his first year, I knew I was going to have problems with some advisees," he says, "but Gordy wasn't going to be one of them."

Powers' fellow students, it turns out, quickly learned to understand his speech. "The interesting thing is that it's the teachers who have trouble," Arnold observes. "The teachers put pressure on themselves to understand every word. But in class after class, the kids very quickly pick up on what he's saying because they don't feel any pressure."

"One person will understand me," Powers explains, "and they will tell the class what I said. If they don't understand me, I'll repeat myself or write it down." He always carries a small notepad for just such occasions, as well as an apparently limitless patience for repeating himself.

Four years later, it's very clear that Powers was right for Exeter. This spring, he was named one of the school's two Presidential Scholars, and at Exeter's commencement ceremony, he received the Williams Cup, which is presented to a four-year student who "has by personal qualities brought distinction to Phillips Exeter," as well as a Cox Medal, awarded to the top five students in the graduating class. Next fall, he will attend Harvard.

Among the many things Powers brought to Exeter was a sign language club he founded, which has helped him bridge any gap between himself and his peers. "It's a lot of fun," Powers says. "It helps them understand what my life is like, and it helps me keep up with my sign language."

People who've gotten to know Powers well say that his disabilities quickly become a rather insignificant characteristic, like his sandy-blond hair or his slight build. Powers himself takes this approach. "It

does influence me and it is a part of who I am," he says, "but it's no big deal."

Hassan agrees. "You get to know him for who he is and what you're struck by is his academic strength. In wonderful ways, the Exeter kids have reached out to him, and Gordy to them. He has a core group of very strong friends."

The way Arnold sees it, Powers may well have taught Exeter as much if not more than what Exeter taught him. "The kids have learned so much from him," he says. "It's a perfect example of how someone can bring so much to the school."

## R a t h a L y ' 0 5

## *'Capacity for Lifelong Growth'*

The thing about improving a great deal is that it implies you weren't doing so well to begin with. Ratha Ly, a four-year senior from Philadelphia, however, readily agrees with that assessment. "At first, I found it very difficult adjusting to Exeter," she says.

With good reason. Ly's parents are both survivors of the Cambodian genocide of 1975 to 1979, which claimed the lives of an estimated 1.7 million people. The Lys immigrated to the United States when Ratha was just a baby, and later had two more children. But when her parents divorced, she quickly took on adult-size responsibilities. "I had to pick up the slack when my mom was at work," Ly says. "Every morning before school, I'd wake up and cook the food and clean the house, and after school I'd come home and take care of my brother and my sister." Nor was her neighborhood, where gangs are a daily fact of life, exactly kid-friendly.

"Ratha had the typical kinds of pressures a student from an inner city faces," says her adviser Carol Cahalane, chair of the health education department. "Her friends didn't value education. But she stuck with the books, even though there was a lot of pressure to go in a different direction."

When an Exeter admissions officer visited her high school, Ly decided to apply and was eventually admitted, arriving at PEA in the fall of 2001. Her previous schooling, however, hadn't prepared her for the rigors she found here. "I didn't know what an adverb was," she admits. "I didn't know how to write those five-paragraph essays. I was at the bottom of the class."

Learning to talk about her difficulties at home was an additional challenge. "In the Cambodian culture, you're not supposed to discuss family problems," Ly says. But she was determined to make it work, and in turn the school reached out to her.

"She's had to cope with much more than the average student here at Exeter," Cahalane says. "But she asked for help and support, and she was able to build from there. She became stronger with each week that went by."

Ly sought out academic tutoring from her teachers and also took advantage of the Academy's counseling programs, including Student Listeners, a peer-to-peer counseling program. The end result is something she is clearly proud of. "It's gotten a lot better," she says. "My trust has expanded. I can open up to people, and my adviser has become like a mother to me. It was challenging, but I'm doing much better academically."

The key to Ly's success, according to Cahalane, is her perseverance. "She's got to be one of the hardest-working people I know. When she sets a goal for herself, she does what she needs to do. She's done a lot on campus, and has really tried to soak up as much as she can at Exeter." Her senior year concluded with two significant achievements: presentation of her senior project, an independent research paper on the Cambodian genocide, and the news that, along with her classmate Brendon Randall-Myers and upper Yujhan Claros, she was awarded the Frank A. Weil '48 Prize for Exemplary Growth and Promise, which honors students who've demonstrated "a drive and a capacity for lifelong growth."

Ly is headed to Wellesley, a school she chose for its strong liberal arts tradition as well as its Southeast Asian studies program. She says that while one of her career goals has been simply to make money, recently she has come full circle to an earlier ambition—to become a teacher, and perhaps one day open a school in Philadelphia to help prepare middle and high school students for the rigors of top colleges. "It's my way of giving back," she says. "I've have to work for everything, but a lot of people have supported me through the journey. I feel really grateful for this opportunity, and I'd like to do the same for others."



**Ratha Ly says she found Exeter overwhelming when she first arrived, but her willingness to ask for support and her perseverance greatly impressed her adviser, Carol Cahalane. "Ratha's got to be one of the hardest-working people I know," says Cahalane. This June Ly was awarded the Weil Prize for Exemplary Growth and Promise.**



Jordan Luke-Close '05

## A World Away

If there were a prize for the senior with the longest commute to school, Jordan Luke-Close of Taranaki, New Zealand would win it, hands down. “Not many people leave New Zealand,” says the one-year senior, who made the 14,000-mile trip to New Hampshire last August and didn’t return home until June. “Australia is a two-hour plane ride. The world seems far away when you’re down there.”

Which made it a bit of a hurdle just to leave her country, much less travel so far from it. Luke-Close admits that New Zealand, and the Maori culture in which she was raised, is fairly insular. “No one in my immediate family has traveled,” she says, “and many people aren’t really interested in knowing what’s out there. But I wanted to break that barrier, and I had the opportunity to do so. It makes me feel lucky.”

Luke-Close learned about Exeter from an American Field Services (AFS) exchange program. AFS helped her apply to Exeter and, after she was admitted, placed her with a host family in Hollis, NH, Andrea and Charlie Seddon. She spent three weeks with them when she first arrived in America and visited them when she could throughout the school year, including vacations. “Whether you like it or not, when you get here, you can’t leave,” she says. “But I had somewhere to go, and that was real comforting.”

While the cultural differences between New Zealand and the United States may not, at first glance, seem great—certainly the language is the same—Luke-Close notes that there are a great many subtle differences. “New Zealanders tend to go with the flow and be more humorous,” she says. “Sometimes the people in my classes couldn’t tell if I was serious or not.” Arriving in America during the presidential election campaign, she was also struck by “how political Americans are.” Beyond that, there’s driving on the other side of the road, snow, and—yes, it’s true—when you flush the toilet, the water spins in the opposite direction. “It still scares me now,” Luke-Close says with a laugh.

Then there were the usual adjustments even local students go through, like getting comfortable with the Harkness system. Luke-Close admits that it was tough at first. “At home, when I handed in a paper, it was between me and the teacher, instead of between me, the teacher and everyone else,” she points out.

“That’s what she struggled most with,” says her adviser, Julie Quinn, PEA’s director of communications. “It took some real work on her part, but she’s gotten to the point where she’s comfortable around the Harkness table. Not only has she come a long way in terms of physical distance, she’s come a long way in dealing with the intricacies of boarding school and American culture. She always enters things with a sense of optimism and cheer, and that has carried her a long way.”

She’s also had the added pressure of having her experience on public display. Before leaving her home country, she was chosen to be featured in a New Zealand public television documentary about four AFS students and their experiences abroad. “They filmed Jordy with her family in New Zealand before she left for Exeter, and they came here twice to film her,” says Quinn. “They were a touch of home for her. They knew what her life was like there, and they knew what her life was like here.”

Luke-Close would certainly agree with Francis Bacon’s truism that travel is “a part of education,” but she says she’ll need some time to digest her experience away from home. “This whole year has been huge for me,” she says. “I want to go back home and settle down for a year or two.” She’s planning to go to college in New Zealand to study broadcasting, but she hasn’t ruled out another exchange program. “I’ve learned a lot about myself,” she says. “Sometimes I’d wonder, ‘Why am I putting myself through this?’ But looking back, it’s been worth it. I made the most of it.”



**As an AFS exchange student from New Zealand, Jordy Luke-Close came a long, long way to enroll at Exeter. “No one in my immediate family has traveled,” she says, “but I wanted to break that barrier, and I had the opportunity to do so. It makes me feel lucky.”**

Jonathan Pierce '05

## One Writer’s Beginnings

You wouldn’t expect changing schools would rattle someone like Jonathan Pierce. Change, after all, has been a constant in Pierce’s life. He moved around a lot as a child, shuttled from foster home to foster home within his extended family, ultimately passing through five different high schools on his way to his diploma.

Yet when he was encouraged to apply to Exeter for a post-graduate year and then admitted, Pierce initially said no. “I didn’t want to start over again,” he explains. He’d spent the last eight months in the same town in Indiana—the longest period of time he’d stayed in one place during high school. A talented basketball player, he’d already been accepted into a small Division 3 college in that state.

However, Exeter’s assistant director of admissions, Jay Tilton, persisted. “We twisted his arm,” he says with a laugh. Tilton, who also serves as assistant coach of the boys varsity basketball team, says that Pierce’s athletic skills certainly caught his attention, “but when I spoke with Jon on the phone and talked to other people who knew him, the things that really impressed me were his maturity and focus.” Tilton told Pierce he should visit Exeter before making up his mind, “and he said he’d at least do that. Well, by the time I saw him he’d already been on campus for three hours, and he had the biggest smile on his face.”

There were, however, episodes in Pierce’s past that are nothing to smile about, including physical abuse by an immediate family member. At Exeter, Pierce kept such issues largely to himself, but when he did choose to speak about them, it was in Phillips Church, where this spring he delivered a meditation that wove together his childhood experiences with a gripping account of an Exeter basketball game, a piece whose power derived not only from its compelling content but also from Pierce’s superb writing. “There wasn’t a dry eye in the church,” says Tilton. “He did a marvelous job.”

“In my mind,” Pierce told his audience, “I’ve been writing for years.” He had long known, he adds now, that the abuse he endured and the perspective he has gained on it “were a story I would want to tell one day. But I had no idea that it would be in front of my classmates in a church at a prep school.” Writing the meditation, he says, gave him the chance “to tie all these experiences together with where I stand now as a man.”

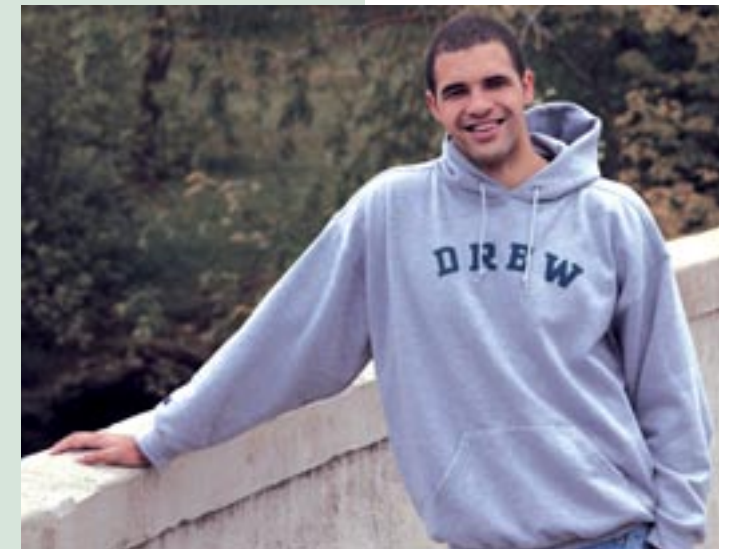
Pierce considers the progress he’s made as a writer one of the chief accomplishments of his year at Exeter, especially when he recalls one of the first essays he wrote for English class, a piece that was not well received. “To his credit,” says Mercy Carbonell, his English teacher, “he really worked on it. There’s a part of him, the athlete in him, that knows you’re going to make a bad shot. You learn how to make a better shot. He came back and wrote this incredible piece. It was about basketball, and it ended up becoming part of his meditation story.”

“Stories build upon themselves,” Pierce says. “The experience of telling my story and the response I received to it have already become another story.”

Pierce’s talent for writing goes hand-in-hand with an ear for literature, adds Carbonell. “He tends to pick up on the contextual current, the thread that’s right inside the narrative. He has a natural instinct for what lies behind something, the emotional core of a piece.”

What Pierce has learned about himself is that he is a lot more than just a great basketball player. “I’ve developed other interests since coming here, things that I love to do that are more important to me than basketball that Exeter opened my eyes to,” he says. “I trust myself a lot more. I know better what I’m capable of.” Or as he put it in his meditation, “There are so many things I can offer that extend farther into the soul than anything anyone could ever do between two hoops.”

Pierce is looking forward to college at Drew University in Madison, NJ, and beyond that, possibly a career in law. Wherever he goes, says Tilton, “We have not heard the last of him. Jon’s the kind of kid that keeps me in coaching and education.” ●



**Jon Pierce left a sizable impression during his PG year at Exeter, not only as an athlete, but also as a writer. For Pierce, the experience showed him that “there are so many things I can offer that extend farther into the soul than anything anyone could ever do between two hoops.”**



# 'The Best Half-Hour of the Week'

For many members of the PEA community, Thursday morning Meditations in Phillips Church are just that.



For the four editors of *A Book of Meditations, Volume 2: 1995–2001* (PEA Press, 2005), meditations are many different things. For Christine Robinson, they are like “small islands on a large, busy campus.” For Peter Greer, they’re “a way for the Academy to write a kind of disjointed memoir.” For David Weber, they “give a school-wide dimension to what our students are doing in English classes all the time: developing a personal voice,” a voice that is “authentic, reflective, honest—and not narcissistic.” For Doug Rogers, they “represent the very best of what Exeter seeks to nurture within our community.”

On Thursday mornings for more than 30 years, teachers and students, staff members and visiting alumni/ae have been gathering in Phillips Church to listen to meditations and, just possibly, to be transformed by what they hear. “There is the silence,” says Robinson, “then the music, then a story that can bring us out of ourselves and into another country or history or self.” If not traditionally religious, those stories “are often profoundly spiritual,” says Rogers. Adds Weber, “I know several faculty members who routinely say that meditation is the best half-hour of the week. Perhaps even more than assembly, it holds the community together.”

If listening to meditations is enriching, so too, the four editors say, is writing them, and they each assign the writing of a meditation to seniors during winter term, as do several other members of the English department. “It comes at a good time in the students’ lives,” says Rogers. “They’re ready for it—intellectually, emotionally—so it’s an assignment that really means something to them.”

That’s a feeling Robinson recognizes. “Through countless drafts,” she says, “writing a meditation allows me, *requires* me, to remember, to reflect, to explore and discover meaning. I may fire off letters when I’m angry; writing meditations centers me, calms me, brings me to things that matter.”

Compiling *A Book of Meditations, Volume 2* was, Rogers says, a thrilling experience, if occasionally a frustrating one. With more than 150 pieces to choose from, “we could have created several exceptional volumes,” he says, but in the end the four editors settled on the 37 they found most “compelling”: 14 by graduating seniors, with the balance by faculty and staff, alumni/ae and Bennett Fellows. The volume is dedicated to the late Rex McGuinn (1951–2002), “a wonderful teacher and a great supporter of meditations,” says Rogers.

On the following pages, we share a few excerpts from the best half-hour of the week. Both volumes of meditations are available through the Exeter Bookstore; go to [www.exeterbook.com](http://www.exeterbook.com) for more information.

ALI TAN '89

## 'We Must Give Our House to the Birds!'

—January 26, 1996—

Long ago, my grandfather was a rice farmer, and a poor one at that. Though he lived simply and worked hard, he dreamed of a better life for his wife and two daughters. But to a house full of girls and with no son to pass on the land and family name, no luck could ever come, or so the villagers thought.

Until one evening, at dusk, a small bird flew into my grandfather’s house through an open window. “Eeeeeeh!” my grandmother screamed. “Chase it out!”

My grandfather did not move. Instead, he watched as the tiny bird flew around the house, swooping, soaring, ascending, diving about their heads. When he finally stepped towards it, the bird shot through the air and settled upon a wooden rafter near the ceiling, out of my grandfather’s sight and reach.

“What will we do?” asked my grandmother.

“Tomorrow,” my grandfather promised, “I will leave all the windows open, so that it can fly away.”

Early the next morning, my grandfather opened all the windows and all the doors in the house. When he returned from his hard day of work in the hot sun, he asked my grandmother if their little visitor had left. “Not funny,” she said, pointing to a small pile of feathers and droppings in the trash. “I can still hear it up there.”

“Then let’s keep the windows and doors open until the sun goes down. Perhaps it will leave at dusk.”

But just as the sun began to set, more birds came gliding through the windows, 16 of

them, swooping and soaring inside the house. My grandparents tried to chase them out, yelling and waving their arms at the birds, but to no avail. These birds were swift and sleek, and they soon alighted on the rafters where the first one had spent the night.

Just as my grandmother was about to break, my grandfather looked into her eyes. “Maybe this is a sign of good fortune. Let us pray to our ancestors and see what happens tomorrow.”

My grandmother just nodded and closed the windows. At least she could keep out the mosquitoes.

At dawn the next morning, my grandfather opened the windows and doors. Seconds later, 17 tiny birds darted straight out the front door. “Good-bye, birds,” he sighed.

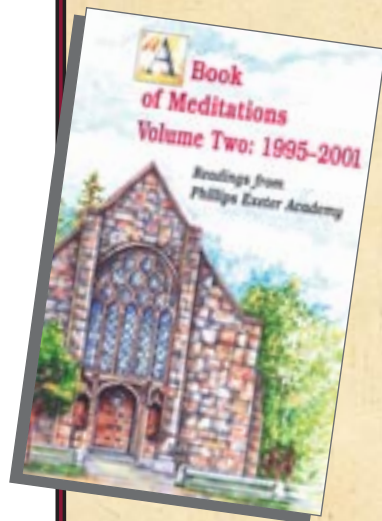
“Do you think they’ll come back?” asked his wife.

“If they have built nests or laid eggs, it might be so.” My grandfather went that morning across the dirt road to his barn, where he found an old ladder tall enough to reach the roof beams of his house. When he reached the rafters, he gasped in amazement. “What are these?” he cried, for these were no ordinary nests. These were not made of leaves or straw but of clear, white material. And instead of resting on the beams, these were stuck upright against the angled ones, as if they had been glued.

My grandfather took two of these nests to town that day and learned that they were *sarang*

“...just as the sun began to set, more birds came gliding through the windows, 16 of them, swooping and soaring inside the house.”

—ALI TAN '89





*burung*. These were the nests of Javanese swiftlets, a rare species of bird able to weave its nest from the threads of its own saliva, thick with seaweed and water. For 10 centuries, the Chinese have believed that the nests are magical, nutritious, medicinal, and consider the nests delicacies, the caviar of the East. When he arrived home that afternoon, he ran into the house and threw open the doors and windows. "We must give our house to the birds!" he shouted, laughing.

My grandmother thought he was crazy. Give our house to the birds? What evil spirit had entered her husband's body?

But then my grandfather explained. "If the birds continue to come, we will be rich. I have sold two nests for enough lumber to build a new house. We have been blessed with this fortune. Some people risk their lives climbing sea cliffs to gather these nests, but we are lucky—the birds have come to us. Let us give our home to the birds, and for now, we will live in the barn."

ANAND DESAI '96

## 'This Is My Heritage'

— Spring, 1996 —

I came home one evening from the fourth grade in a fury. Somewhere between the swing set and sandbox and jungle gym during recess, I had somehow realized that I didn't want to be Hindu, that none of my friends were Hindu, and that I couldn't believe I had been forced to be something I didn't want to be for the past ten years of my life. When my father came home that evening, before he could close the garage door behind him, I asked why I had to be Hindu just because he was, why I had to go to the temple just because he did, just because I was born into this family. He picked me up and placed me in the seat of the riding lawn mower that still smelled like freshly cut grass. I put my hands on the steering wheel, and he knelt down beside me, still in his white coat and surgical greens, his shoes still covered with those blue surgical booties. He asked me, "What's the most important thing in life, Anand?"

"To be a good human being," I answered, as I turned the steering wheel back and forth, back and forth.

"Then be a good human being, always," he said, "and you'll be more Hindu than anyone

else in the world." I stopped steering and said nothing more to him that evening; I went to sleep under the white sheet and white down comforter, the leaves and the crickets louder after I turned off the lights and lay in the warm darkness, thinking: this is my culture, this is my heritage. I will carry on the tradition.

REX MCGUINN

## On Generosity

— November 14, 1996 —

When I was 13, I invited seven of my friends to sleep over on a Saturday night. I helped my dad stock up on Coca-Cola; for the main meal we decided on frozen pizzas, a novelty in those years and a great treat in the mountains of North Carolina before the days of Pizza Hut. I went to each of my friends and asked them how many pieces they could eat, and helped my dad purchase just the right amount. My best friend, Toby Vosburgh, told me he would not be having pizza, because he would have to come late.

On the Saturday night of the party, we were all having a great time bringing the steaming pizzas from the oven one by one and dividing up the pieces. I knew exactly how many I had to look forward to, even as I ate the piece most recent from the stove. As we were starting the third pizza, my best friend came walking in. He had been able to get away from his commitment earlier than he had thought. I welcomed him in, fixed him a Coke, and explained to him that he was welcome to snacks, but the pizzas were all spoken for.

I was the third child in my family, and my father by this time had grown mellow in his ways. But at this moment he was very angry. He took me into the next room and explained to me that when we invited guests to our house, we would welcome them and offer them all the food and drink available. I agreed with him, but I pointed out that I had offered my friend Toby all the pizza he could eat, and he had said he wouldn't be there to have any. I had justice on my side. I had the facts; I had done everything I should have to prepare for this evening. If we gave Toby his share of pizza, the rest of us might not get all the pieces we had planned for, and since he hadn't ordered any, he didn't deserve any.

My dad, in most cases indulgent of me to

a fault, wouldn't budge. Toby was our guest, and I would have to offer him everything we had available to serve. Though I wasn't at all happy about it, we went back into the kitchen, and everyone sat down together for pizza and Coke.

That moment typifies a quality I admired most in my father: his willingness to support and give to others. And since then, whenever I have allowed a passion for justice or my own selfish needs to win out when I might have acted with generosity toward another, I have sooner or later felt my father's presence and his disappointment.

Even today I feel the justice of my argument about the slices of pizza that Saturday night. But as I grow older, I am coming to value justice less and less. Not in the political world. I still think that too few people in this world control too much of the wealth, and I would like to see a more just distribution. I still think that violent criminals ought to be removed from society. I still work hard to defeat racist politicians. But in the realm of personal relationships, I believe more and more that the generous impulse carries us so much further than our desire for justice.

PETER GREER '58; '81 (HON.); P'84

## Re-Creation

— November 13, 1997 —

In the middle of last June, Anja and I went to Boston to see the liver-cancer specialist with whom we have spent more time than we would like, and he gave us news that we didn't want to hear, that Anja would have to undergo a new kind of treatment. We made our way home and through the rest of the day in a daze of sadness.

The next morning, with no school routine to distract us, we found ourselves face to face with our uncertain future. We went through the motions, the cereal and milk, the grapefruit juice, the Kona coffee, the "Today" show droning in the background, our minds on only one thing. And then one of us, and neither of us remembers who it was, one of us blurted out, "Hey, look at that!"

And we came together at the east window of our kitchen and looked together at the larger bird feeder standing next to the lilac bushes and realized together that what we were seeing was a pair of Evening Grosbeaks. We grabbed

our binoculars, and gazed and exclaimed and exclaimed and gazed. It was quite a sight! For one thing the bird is handsome, in a bold, somewhat garish way, looking like "an overgrown American Goldfinch," the Peterson Guide aptly says. For another, it is Anja's favorite winter bird.

But here's the catch: We were in June, not January. A winter bird in a summer setting. Just how unlikely was this moment, we wondered. I checked the writings of Edward Howe Forbush, the classic observer of birds in New England, and he was as informative as usual: the Evening Grosbeak, he said, is a "more or less common and regular winter visitor even as far south as Rhode Island and Connecticut," but, in the summer, it is, and here he used the parlance of birders, "accidental."

So we were gazing at and exclaiming about an accidental visitor. And we were smiling, and our own excited chirpings had replaced the drone of the "Today" show, and suddenly the Kona coffee tasted as good as it had in Hawaii, and I realized that, having been drawn from inside our world of grim uncertainty outside into a world of accidental beauty, we had been, in that instant, re-created.

I realized as well that, had I not received the outdoor education that I had, we would not have seen those birds. We might have seen a pair of birds on the feeder, if we had happened to have a feeder, and we might have thought of them as somehow unusual, but we would not have seen the birds that we saw in the way that we saw them, the birds that helped us re-create ourselves, with our spirits revived, our hopes rekindled, our determination once again evident. Some would say that we had experienced a moment of grace. Although personally not drawn in this direction, I feel in this case no impulse to demur.

*"As I grow older, I am coming to value justice less and less. Not in the political world. But in the realm of personal relationships, I believe more and more that the generous impulse carries us so much further than our desire for justice."*

—REX MCGUINN



*"I appreciate that I've been exposed to tragedy, because in the same light, I've been exposed to passion, which has done to my outlook on life what eyes in the back of my head would do for my vision."*

—ALEXANDER VALHOULI '00

CHRISTINE ROBINSON '83 (HON.)

## The Simplest Thing Is to Call Him a Homeless Man

— February 26, 1998 —

I pass him each morning on my way to the Bean-Bag cafe, avoiding eye contact like a good New England Yankee. He seems out of place in this residential San Francisco neighborhood, so unlike the hustlers on the busy streets downtown or the panhandlers up on Haight Street. He just sits quietly, having a

smoke, or roots around in his carts or, sometimes, sleeps with an arm over his eyes. Once in a while his dog will nip at my cuffs.

*Cowboy, get over here* are the first words I remember. On a Tuesday in mid-September, he asks me if he could have the sports section of the *Chronicle*, and my daily ritual of newspaper and coffee begins to include handing Section F to the homeless man.

For weeks, he remained a symbol and a reminder of my privilege. I could ease my conscience by the gesture of a newspaper, and see only neglect, deprivation, injustice, despair. He was dirty; he was without family. He drank in the morning; he had little protection in a storm. He marked the failure of government, of policy, of capitalism. And so, for a

time, he was just a figure on the urban landscape, he was poverty, he was homelessness, he was the dark side of San Francisco's beauty.

Until World Series time: New York against Atlanta, and I begin to skim Section F on my way up the street and to linger on the sidewalk with this man I've heard called Eddie.

As I listen, he moves, imperceptibly then steadily into a space I had not imagined, a space in which stories and memories, baseball and dreams, bring the two of us together.

DAVID WEBER '71, '74 (HON.)

## Thinking About Winning

— Fall 1999 —

Competitively speaking, cross-country is sort of a crude sport. In our conference, a good one, if you have five or six or seven guys who can run three miles in less than or close to 16 minutes, you do well. If not, then not. Since when school began last year no one on our team had ever run our three-mile course in less than 18 minutes (and one minute is a pretty large improvement from one year to the next), we could see from the first day that wins would be hard to come by. In fact, we compiled a losing record for the first time since the 1980s. We did eventually defeat several opposing teams, but we lost several other meets by large margins. Andover dusted us.

So it's tempting this year to take last year as a negative model. Yet my memory of last year's season is one of almost complete joy. This is a paradox to reckon with. It defies very deep currents in American culture. . . .

Last year, when we mostly lost, the team not only didn't whine, it didn't lose its self-respect or its pleasure in this glorious but austere sport. We (that is, the runners) ran for an hour and more on roads through the autumnal countryside, on trails through the familiar, cooling woods; we ran repeats on the track and up the long hill to the bridge over the railroad tracks; everybody was doing the same thing, sometimes alone, sometimes with teammates who embraced the same challenge. And we got better, fitter, stronger. A runner who the year before was painful to watch became something of an athlete and took three minutes off his time for the three-mile run. We lost to South Portland, to Portsmouth, to St. Paul's, to Northfield Mount Hermon, to Deerfield, but there was no whining, because the team knew what it was doing, and knew that what it was doing was good.

A photograph of the 1997 team hangs on the wall of my classroom, Phillips 4. Taken a

few minutes after the completion of the varsity race at that year's Interschols, it shows the seven varsity runners walking toward the gym and the showers, arms over each other's shoulders. They are covered in mud; they are palpably tired, spent. The picture doesn't reveal how the team did (we were a disappointing fourth); it isn't about that. It's about being a team of runners, as my high school team was, as last year's team here was, as I believe this year's team is and will be. And it's about running itself, about sport, about a shared commitment to something that is hard, and precious, whatever the outcome.

DOUGLAS G. ROGERS

## Baseball in the Dark

— February 8, 1999 —

Picture this moment: the Rogers' home, a small town in the northeastern corner of Ohio, a small boy nestled in his bed on a cool, summer evening. Light flannel sheets: in summer, soft and clean with the fragrance of Bill Finley's cornfields and the tall white pines from our backyard, my mother's caress lingering in the smooth folds of cotton. I lie there beneath the cozy comforter, a field itself of red, white, and blue figures, Cleveland Indians batters, their faces all the same, all inscrutable, the pitchers all right-handed, each captured in the exact moment of releasing the ball, the catchers squatting, knees squared, padded gloves up, eyes focused straight ahead. And I curl there, propped up against two plump pillows, the headphones of my crystal radio carrying to my ears the voice of Ken Coleman, the voice of the Cleveland Indians, speaking directly to me, official scorer, pencil poised in my right hand, scorebook against my thighs, the notebook cover once an A&P grocery bag, now born anew in the cleanly traced image of outfielder Rocky Colavito, his Batman chin and hawk nose and eagle-sharp eyes, the features of my hero.

My mother had tucked me in, kissed me goodnight, her footsteps echoing down the hallway. I had lain there quietly, waiting, waiting, before slipping over, furtive, foxlike, to my hidden treasure: the crystal radio, large silver headphones, flashlight, scorebook, and pencil, all tucked beneath a layer of T-shirts and underwear in my bottom dresser drawer.

TOM RAMSEY

## Struggling With the Material

— March 4, 1999 —

At the beginning of this term, almost as a lark, I joined a pottery class of adult learners offered every Thursday evening in the ceramics studio. Now I haven't done ceramics since third grade when I made a pinch pot, stuck the eraser on the end of my pencil into the sides of it so it was dimpled all over like a golf ball, glazed it red on the outside and white on the inside, called it an ashtray, and gave it to my dad for Father's Day.

In the first class this term, I quickly discovered that my skills had not magically developed from disuse in the past 37 years. My first effort looked suspiciously like the ashtray. But I also discovered that I wanted to keep trying, something that hadn't been the case in third grade. So I tried a coil pot made of long lazy snakes of clay.

And then one night, I decided to work on the wheel. It took me a while to get the thing going, and the first few times my arms and the clay were all over the place. But gradually, I settled down. The wet clay began to move in my hands, out and up, the wheel turning fast and smooth beneath me. And something began to take shape on the turntable before me: a cup, a bowl. But I didn't stop even though the shape was recognizable, but kept on working the clay until it fell apart in a wet mass, and I had to start all over with a new lump: wedging, centering the mass on the table, revving up the wheel, working the clay, trying to get my hands to talk to one another as someone put it, collapsing the mass, going at it again, almost obsessively. Two hours later I was still at it.

Something besides making pots was going on here, because I wasn't making anything, just forming and reforming, working the clay over and over until there was nothing I could work with any longer, and then starting again. I kept at this process, even though I am not sure exactly what I was keeping at. A struggling with the material, a search for something lost or not there yet, an earnest questioning of the clay to see what it was about. A process that felt very much like the questioning and attempted answering I am doing with my own life these days.

(continued on page 99)



## Meditations

(continued from page 35)

MARK HIZA

### A Borrowed Genealogy

— December 9, 1999 —

I am walking west of the old barn, past the raspberry patch, past the block of 30-year-old Cortlands. I enter the woods, threading through oak and pine, heading for an imagined sound. I pause and watch David McCrillis working. He is quarrying granite: cleaving large blocks for the foundation of the barn behind me. It is late morning, October 11, 1833.

David is out on the expanse of granite, kneeling on the stone, working with a hammer and star drill, slowly tattooing the convex outcropping of stone with a line of shallow holes. He finishes a line, stands and stretches—flexing hands cramped from gripping the hammer and drill. He bends to the line of holes and drops two L-shaped pieces of iron, called feathers, into each hole, orienting the L's like upside-down bookends, and then he places a small iron wedge in between each set of feathers. Now he is hammering in the wedges—iron pushing on iron pushing on stone—he is working with great concentration. He seems tired. A compassionate observer might describe him as sad. I know the reason for his sadness. As he works, his 2-year-old daughter is sick in bed with scarlet fever. His wife, Abigail, is caring for the girl. David works patiently, hammering a uniform pattern of pressure across the broad back of the stone. It doesn't seem possible that the small wedges can perform the trick of cleaving a 10-foot long, four-foot high, two-foot thick block of granite from the huge stone, but as I watch I hear a sudden, distinct crack, and the block falls.

I walk up to the outcropping, onto its gently rounded surface, and approach the sharp, man-made edge. David is gone. I look over the edge and see, four feet below me, a granite block covered in leaves. In that leaf mold I have found a star drill, the head of a three-pound hammer, feathers and wedges. I move away from the quarry and, while heading back toward the barn, hear the flat ring of the hammer on the drill. I turn around and watch David start a new line of holes, two feet in from the

cleaved edge. He stops hammering, raises his head, and seems to wait for something. Abigail calls from the house. "David! Come quickly! Sarah is dead!" David stands and drops his tools. They fall for 100 years.

I follow David as he heads home. We walk in the track of the stone boat. I stop at the half-built foundation of the barn, and watch him embrace his wife and enter the house. It is my house now, and I own its ghosts.

MERCY CARBONELL

### The Curvature of History and Inheritance

— Winter, 2000 —

I was in American Literature class at Milton Academy, discussing Thoreau, when my grandmother died. Maggie had just read out loud his opening paragraphs to *Life Without Principle* and she had ended on his resounding note: "Let us consider the ways in which we spend our lives."

My grandmother's heart may have stopped beating at just that moment. I will never know. I wasn't there, in the ICU of the Wilmington Hospital, when she finally gave out or took in her last breath at 10 minutes to eleven on January 5, 2000. I was in American Literature class and Thoreau was speaking through the voice of a 16-year-old girl, who had just returned from the Milton Mountain School. And I was thinking of my students, 16 and 17 years old, tired of the routine of school, disengaged at times, waiting for the bells to ring, not convinced they have choices in their lives, plugging away, rushing here and there, soaking up facts and dates, living through deadlines, not consciously aware yet that each step they take can be a choice, can be theirs. If they want it to be.

I was thinking of Thoreau and the Basin in Franconia Notch in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. I was thinking of the Sunday when I stood there with Christine, alone on the icy paths, my new winter boots keeping me on solid ground. I was thinking of the almost human curves in the rock formations and the "old man's foot," that can be found in the way the rocks curl and stretch and diverge and come together. If you look long enough and want to see it. I was thinking about how four days ago I had been there, where Thoreau had once

been a century before. And I was wishing that I could pile these students into a car and drive them on I-93 North through the White Mountains and take them to the Basin, show them what I had seen last Sunday, and share with them what Thoreau had said in 1857. I was thinking about what it means to live truly, deeply, with intention, in tune with what is around you. And in these ways I was perhaps thinking about death, about dying.

And perhaps this is the way living begins.

ALEXANDER R. VALHOULI '00

### 'A Real, Live Piece of Me'

— April 13, 2000 —

This meditation is about what I've got, right now. It's a real, live piece of me. For months I've been preoccupied with next year: Will it be college or work? I've been overwhelmed by the winter blues, cold weather and the one-week stretch that separates January 28, my father's birthday, and February 3, his death day....

My father was good at living. He was capable of making life simple. He did not look ahead and wish he was where he could possibly or perhaps impossibly be. He was delighted with the past. The future was to be respected, not feared or desired, and the present was so simple; action followed aspiration....

It's not easy taking in the present with the type of simplicity that my father did; that's why I'm writing. I appreciate that I've been exposed to tragedy, because in the same light, I've been exposed to passion, which has done to my outlook on life what eyes in the back of my head would do for my vision. I think a lot less gets by me. Memories don't fade away; some are just not fully put together, not completed so they remain silenced and unappreciated. I'm lucky. I've begun to understand that I have earned my blessings. Having 13 years with my father was perfect. It was 13 years longer than it might have been. Today, I value each moment that I share with the people I love and respect, the people I consider friends and teachers and the people who intrigue me. I wish that we may all discover simplicity in our lives and appreciate where we are at all times. It's much easier said than done, but that's why it's a wish. ■



# Girls Water Polo Thrives In the Pool—And on the Road

By Ken Belbin



BRIAN CROWLEY (2)

*Faced with the prospect of a full season of games and no home pool, the girls water polo squad more than rose to the challenge, using the 60-mile round trip to a Manchester, NH, practice facility to focus on their sport and to bond as a team.*

When is a home game not a home game?

Members of Exeter's girls water polo squad know the answer to this riddle all too well. Just before the start of the team's season, Exeter closed the 35-year-old Love Gym pool in order to begin work on a new, state-of-the-art swimming, diving and water polo facility that is scheduled to open in January 2006.

Faced with the prospect of a full season of games and no pool, head coach Lundy Smith and his charges knew they had a long road ahead of them. Just how long that road turned out to be can be measured in more than just wins and losses. It can be measured on a good, old-fashioned odometer.

Four days a week, the team made the 60-mile round trip between Exeter and Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester. They also played a handful of "home" matches there, including a quarterfinal victory over Andover in the New England tournament.

"It was definitely an experience," says Smith with a chuckle. Yet in spite of the team's nomadic spring and its relative youth (the girls spring water polo program was introduced in the late 1990s and became a varsity sport only in 2001), this is clearly a program on the rise. Under Smith's guidance, a team that was still "learning the basics" as recently as two years ago has matured into an experienced group of players who've begun to master the tactical side of their sport.

A collegiate water polo player at Pomona College, Smith joined the Exeter faculty in 2001 as an English instructor, and became girls water polo coach that same year. "In the beginning," he says, "I was looking for good swimmers to whom I could teach the fundamental physical skills you need to play this sport." But over time, as team members began developing those skills, Smith knew his program was taking a turn for the better. "We had

stronger athletes each year," he says. "We're at a much more sophisticated level now."

While the team has finished fourth at the New England championships each of the last three years, it has, according to Smith, improved each time. The squad posted a 10-9 mark this season and came within a whisker of stunning eventual champion Suffield in the semifinals, losing 6-5.

But the 2005 season will stand out in Smith's mind because of how the team rose to the challenge of no home games and plenty of long hours spent on vans and buses. In fact, Smith has come to regard all that commuting as an actual advantage, but one that could not be fully appreciated until the season was over.

"When you're on the road all season, you spend a lot of time with the same people," he says. "Because of that, we were far more prepared. Everyone was on time and ready to swim. There was a tremendous drop off in absenteeism.

"But more than that," he adds, "it brought the team closer than any I've ever seen."

Personality issues, the kind all teams face, had to be set aside. "It was hard at first," admits Erin Turmelle '06, a day student from Stratham, NH. "We had to strictly budget our time. But our core group grew so close. There was simply no room for egos. Sure, we got angry with each other some times, but on the ride to or from practice, we would talk it out. We couldn't stay angry. We just grew closer and closer as the season moved along."

Kendall Snyder '05 could be considered the program's first player/assistant coach. A California resident, Snyder was one of the only players to have previous experience in the sport before coming to Exeter, and she finished as the team leader in goals and points. According to Smith, she also emerged as a true teacher of the game, setting aside whatever time it took to help her teammates in the water. "She was naturally gifted," Smith says, "not only in playing the sport, but in teaching it."

"What set our team apart was that because of the situation we were in, everyone really wanted to be there," Snyder says. "We saw so much of each other, and we had to be truly focused. Our practices were actually a bit shorter than they would have been at home, but that still meant we spent three hours together each day."

It turned out to be time well spent. "For those three hours," Snyder says, "we could just let go of schoolwork and life back on campus and focus on each other. There's no doubt that made us better and drew us closer."

As for the future, Smith sees nothing but good things. "The new pool will be one of the finest in New England," he says, "and the core group we have returning is so close that I expect even more improvement next season." ■

*Exeter's new pool received a recent boost from John Fisher '77, who hopes to inspire other alumni/ae, parents and friends to support the project.*

*Fisher will match gifts of \$25,000 or more, up to a total of \$1 million, to help reach the overall fund-raising goal of \$2 million. Interested parties should contact Will Davison in the office of alumni/ae affairs and development at (603) 777-3681; wdavison@exeter.edu.*

## Stepping Back, But Not Stepping Down

It may be the end of an era for the boys swimming and water polo programs at Exeter, but it certainly isn't the end for legendary coach Roger Nekton '69 (Hon.).

Nekton stepped down at the end of the academic year as head coach of these two outstanding programs, which he has guided since 1963 and 1971, respectively. But to hear him talk about the change, he's merely "stepping back, not stepping down."

"I'm not ready to retire yet, and I plan to stay very active," says Nekton. "I recently moved to part-time teaching status and I'll stay involved with the programs in a similar capacity."

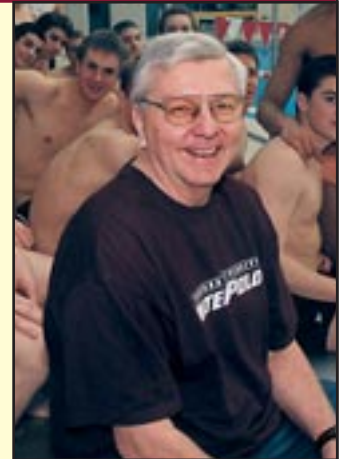
Nekton's teams have won more than 20 New England water polo championships as well as 13 of the last 14 swimming titles. "He's been an institution not only at our school, but all across New England," says Athletic Director Dave Hudson. "The true measure of his success has been the lives he has affected. I hear this often from former athletes and parents. He epitomizes what a successful coach and teacher is."

"Championships aside," says girls water polo coach Lundy Smith, "what has made him so good is that he is an excellent teacher. He always knows how to bring out the best talent in a student-athlete."

"Exeter kids are always enthusiastic, and they have great minds," Nekton notes. "I'm not ready to disconnect from them." He will stay on to oversee the boys JV swimming and water polo teams, and continue to teach in the physical education department. Don Mills, Nekton's assistant coach for the last two seasons, will take the reins as varsity head coach of both swimming and water polo.

Why now? "Things just fell into place," Nekton says. "We all naturally progress through our careers, and this move simply allows me to continue to do what I love but also to spend more time with my wife"—Kathy Nekton, Exeter's Vira I. Heinz Professor and a longtime physical education instructor and coach. —K.B.

*For more on Roger Nekton's coaching career, go to [www.exeter.edu/publications/exeter/spring\\_02/splash.html](http://www.exeter.edu/publications/exeter/spring_02/splash.html)*

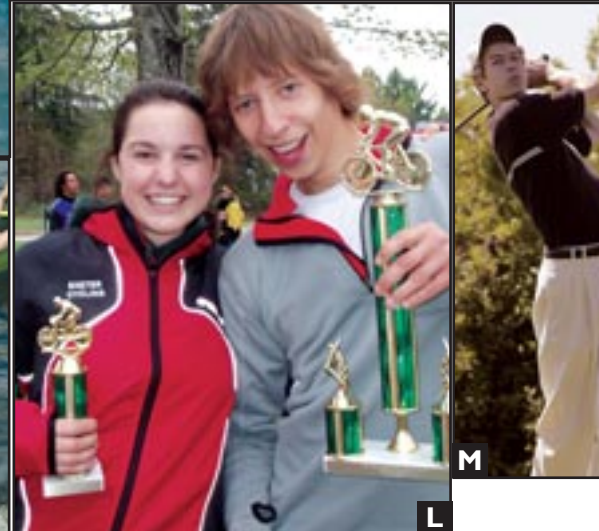


**During his four-plus decades of coaching, Roger Nekton has become an institution not only at Exeter, but all across New England.**





Spring Sports



**(A) Baseball**  
**Record: 12-4**  
**New England Tournament Selection**  
Dana J.P. Wingate Memorial Trophy,  
MVPs: Ryan Lapointe '06,  
Phil Negus '06  
Coach: Bill Dennehy  
Captain: Ryan Lapointe '06

**(B) Softball**  
**Record: 6-7**  
MVP: Mairead Small Staid '06  
Coach: Bruce Pruitt  
Captains: Abby Abisinito '05,  
Lucy McKinstry '05

**(C) Boys Lacrosse**  
**Record: 15-4**  
Joseph T. Gifford Memorial Trophy,  
MVP: Matthew Harrigan '05  
Class of '47 Robert W. Kesler '47  
(Hon.) Award: Kirk Bansak '05  
Coach: Eric Bergofsky  
Captain: Kirk Bansak '05

**(D) Girls Lacrosse**  
**Record: 6-8**  
Holleran Family Award,  
MVP: Ashley Hines '05  
Class of '47 Robert W. Kesler '47  
(Hon.) Award: Kiele Raymond '05  
Coach: Kathy Nekton  
Captains: Ashley Hines '05,  
Kiele Raymond '05

**(E) Boys Tennis**  
**Record: 3-7**  
Arthur H. Lockett Memorial Trophy,  
MVP: Nicholas Day '05  
Coach: Tony Greene  
Captains: Win Mixter '05,  
Nicholas Day '05

**(F) Girls Tennis**  
**Record: 3-2**  
MVP: Casey Simchik '06  
Coach: Jean Chase Farnum  
Captain: Casey Simchik '06

**(G) Girls Water Polo**  
**Record: 10-9**  
**New England Tournament Semifinalist**  
MVP: Kendall Snyder '05  
Coach: Lundy Smith  
Captains: Kendall Snyder '05,  
Lillian Chen '05, Lily Zhou '05

**(H) Boys Track & Field**  
**Record: 4-0**  
**New England Champions!**  
Stephen Potter Memorial Trophy,  
MVP: Victor Martinez '05  
JV MVP: Zig Wronsky '08  
Coach: Hilary Coder  
Captains: Dominic Powell '05,  
Aaron Gadson '05, Arno Ferguson '05,  
Ben Brubaker '05

**(I) Girls Track & Field**  
**Record: 3-1**  
**New England Champions!**  
MVP: Jan Ng '05  
Prep MVP: Reny Colton '08  
Coach: Hilary Coder  
Captains: Jan Ng '05,  
Emma Hiza '05

**(J) Boys Crew**  
**Record: 3-7**  
Charles M. Swift Coaches' Trophy:  
Andrew Collard '05  
Coaches: Lawrence Smith,  
David Swift  
Captain: Evan Daley '05

**(K) Girls Crew**  
**Record: 1-9**  
E. Chandler Sanborn Trophy:  
Courtney Emerson '05  
Coaches: Chandra Glick,  
Becky Moore  
Captain: Courtney Emerson '05

**(L) Cycling**  
**Record: 8-0**  
**New England Champions!**  
Riders of the Year: Peteris Liepins '05,  
Jennifer Stebbins '05  
Coach: Don Mills  
Captains: Jennifer Stebbins '05,  
Peteris Liepins '05

**(M) Golf**  
**Record: 4-3**  
Coach: George Mangan  
Captain: Michael Shore '05

**PHILIP CURTIS GOODWIN '25**  
**FOUR-YEAR AWARD**  
FOR SPORTSMANSHIP  
& PARTICIPATION  
**BOYS**  
**MATTHEW RUSSELL '05**  
**GIRLS**  
**ASHLEY HINES '05**



## DAVID PUTNAM '59: FAMILY MATTERS

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City, UT, is the world's largest genealogical reference library. To David Putnam '59, its collection of 2.4 million micro-filmed records, 310,000 books and 4,500 periodicals make it a place of exhilaration and wonder. As a family history librarian there, Putnam meets people from all over the world who come to the library to learn about their ancestors.

Putnam actually retired two years ago after 30 years of service at the library, which is sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But almost immediately, he returned to his former job as a part-time volunteer. "I love to help people who have a passion for family history," he says. "Every request is like a Sherlock Holmes' case to solve."

Genealogy is no longer a matter of poring through dusty manuscripts and records. The library has 50 computers on each of its five floors, and these computers are available for use by the public. Putnam said people can also find help with their research at the library's Family History Centers located in over 4,000 cities throughout the world. The centers are listed on the library's Internet site, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).

But it is the personal contact that excites Putnam most. "When visitors come to the library," he says, "we can spend some time with them and really get them started on their research. Every request is unique in some way, but often people are looking for the name of an ancestor's parents. Beyond that, many visitors are interested in where their family member came from." The library has records available from the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa and many other nations.

Putnam points out that a majority of the library's records contain information about persons living before 1930, with some records stretching back to the early 1500s, enabling some library patrons to trace back their ancestors over several hundred years. Many of the library's vast databases are also available on the library's website. Patrons can also search other databases, such as the one maintained by the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation,



*"I love to help people who have a passion for family history," says David Putnam '59, of his work at Salt Lake City's world-renowned Family History Library. "Every request is like a Sherlock Holmes' case to solve."*

Inc. One recent visitor to that site found not only the name of the ship that carried her great-uncle to America, but also his height and eye color, who paid his passage and where he resided upon arrival.

In addition to assisting library patrons with their research, Putnam also enjoys revising the research outlines for the United States and Canada. The library publishes such guides for every state and Canadian province, and for many other countries as well. These, too, are available for free on the library's website.

A Dartmouth graduate and former teacher, Putnam returned to school at Brigham Young University to study history, geography and genealogy to prepare himself for his position at the library. But the sense of service that he brings to his work, he says, was strongly influenced by Exeter. "Exeter's inspiring values left a powerful impression on my young mind and heart," he says. "I remember reading in 1963 about Principal Saltonstall going to Africa with the Peace Corps. I had tremendous respect for him, and was impressed by his desire to serve. That example of *non sibi* has remained with me. Today, I find my greatest happiness as I lose myself in serving others."

—Julie Quinn



## CHRISTOPHER MOUTIS '82: LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD (FOOD)

As a child of a PEA faculty member, Christopher Moutis '82 grew up on campus and always expected he would attend the Academy, just as his older brother and sister had before him. But just as he was about to enroll, his father, Nick Moutis, an administrator in the PEA physical education program for 25 years, was offered a job at Springfield College and the entire family moved to Massachusetts.

But Chris Moutis' attachment to the town of Exeter was strong enough to draw him back, not once, but twice: the first time, in 1979, to enter the Academy, and then as an adult to establish himself here as a restaurant owner. In 1992, he opened the Tavern, a popular bar and restaurant in downtown Exeter. Ten years later, after selling the Tavern, he opened his second restaurant, the Townlyne Grille, on the Exeter/Hampton line.

"I so enjoyed growing up here," Moutis says. "As a child, the town and the Academy were one in my head. I feel I had the best of both worlds—my father was a faculty member, while my mother, a science teacher at a public school, was active in town affairs." Moutis also had the best of both worlds in another sense: "I had grown up on campus, where there was lots of freedom yet a terrific amount of safety and security. When I came here as a student, it was like coming home, but I lived in a dorm as a boarder, so I wound up getting the total experience."

After college at the University of New Hampshire and a year in Washington, D.C., as an intern for N.H. Senator Warren Rudman, Moutis came back to Exeter for good. He laughs now when he recalls a story his parents have told him. "Both my grandparents owned restaurants in New Jersey, five blocks apart," he says. "At age 6, I told relatives that I wanted to have my own restaurant. Already, I was drawn to the constant change and challenge of the business." Although his parents both were educators, Chris followed his grandparents' vocation and entered the restaurant business, but in the "notoriously difficult restaurant town of Exeter, which upends business people who don't understand the incredibly mixed economic demographic and the necessity of offering broad appeal."

The secret of his longevity has turned out to be his knowledge of what the town lacked and of what its residents might like. "Offering a



*Chris Moutis '82 grew up on the Exeter campus, and then returned to the town as an adult and became a successful restaurateur.*

mix works well," says Moutis. "At the Grille, there's a heavy emphasis on beef and seafood, Thai dishes, Greek food because I am Greek, vegetarian items and other lighter fare."

People who stop by the Townlyne Grille today will likely find Moutis there, no matter the hour, whether he is overseeing restaurant business in the mornings, tending the bar in the late afternoon hours or greeting customers in the evenings. He couldn't imagine doing anything else. "The best thing about the restaurant business is the constant change," he says. "No one day is like another and each day brings a different set of problems and a different set of gratifications." The Moutis name still carries weight. Customers will occasionally ask about his parents, like a former advisee of his father's who remembered Moutis as a child growing up in Merrill Hall.

While the restaurant business has won out for now, at one point Moutis thought he might be headed for a career in the political arena. He retains his civic interest, serving the town of Exeter in various capacities—as chairman of the town budget committee and a member of the chamber of commerce and the river advisory and capital improvements committees. Of this work, he says, "It's not unlike the restaurant business in that the challenges are constant and ever changing." At present, Moutis has no ambition for elective office, but he intends to remain active with an eye to future options. "In five years, he says, "who knows?"

—Janice Reiter



## KEYA KEITA '95: LOOKING FOR AMERICA

Long before September 11, 2001, Keya Keita '95 went "looking for America" around the globe, asking the same sort of questions Americans began pondering in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

Keita, a filmmaker, and her mother, Elizabeth Gill Lui, a fine art photographer, spent two years filming and photographing U.S. embassies around the world, seeking to better understand what they call "America's cultural diplomacy" and the ways that American embassies embody national identity in an international arena. They canvassed a total of 52 countries over the course of several trips, choosing locales for their architectural and geopolitical significance to American history.

Their travels have now resulted in a book, *Building Diplomacy: The Architecture of American Embassies* (Cornell University Press, 2004), a collection of Lui's striking large-format color photographs; a traveling exhibition of those photos; and a live-action documentary, *Looking for America*, Keita's portrait of the "cultural context within which these embassies stand," and a natural companion to her mother's book. By working together, she says, they were able to document "both the official representation of our nation through the architecture of our government's property and the unofficial representation of our nation through the cultural migration of commerce, entertainment and style."

In 1999, after first securing independent funding (and thus ensuring creative freedom for their project), Lui approached the U.S. State Department with her proposal to document American embassies around the world. As a photographer, she has long been interested in architecture's "meanings and metaphors." (Her previous book, *Closed Mondays*, examined art museums as "architectural icons and cultural symbols.") It took Lui a full year to make her way through "the layers of State Department bureaucracy," but in 2000, the Clinton Administration signed off on the project and Lui and Keita commenced their travels that November. Over the next two years, the mother-daughter team found themselves glacier-trekking in Iceland, riding camels to the pyramids at Giza before sunrise and climbing the Great Wall of China at sunset.

September 11, 2001 found them filming in Paris, and the most fre-



BRIAN CROWLEY

*Together with her mother, photographer Elizabeth Gill Lui (left), filmmaker Keya Keita '95 (right) spent two years documenting U.S. embassies around the world.*

quent question Keita and Lui are asked is what impact that day and its aftermath had on their project. Less than you might think, they reply, because heightened security has been a fact of life for U.S. embassies ever since the 1983 bombing of the embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut. While American embassies "need to be secure in a conflicted world," says Lui, fortress-like buildings "can project an image that is antithetical to the work of diplomacy," and become a ready symbol for unpopular American policies. It is, she adds, a very difficult balancing act.

A harder question to answer, they add, is the impact of September 11 and its aftermath—including the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq—on America's standing in the world. It's a question that Keita considers carefully and poignantly in *Looking for America*. What interests her, she says, are the many ways that bridges are built and dialogues across cultures initiated, separate from the sort of official negotiations that take place behind closed doors at the United Nations.

"Our journey was as much about the why of diplomacy as it was about the what and the how," Keita writes in *Building Diplomacy*. "When one travels to foreign countries it becomes clear that the American flag flies in the presence of the world's diverse cultures, reminding us why employing diplomacy in all matters is an imperative."

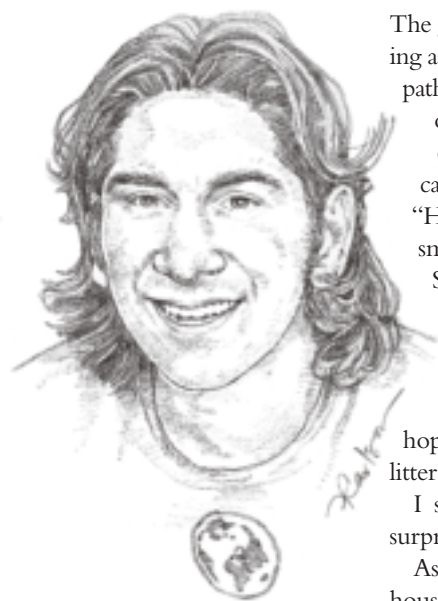
—Shu Shin Luh '95

For more information, go to [www.buildingdiplomacy.com](http://www.buildingdiplomacy.com)



## ‘ALGO PARA COMPARTIR’: SOMETHING TO SHARE

By Sartaj Shyam Narang '04



Sartaj Shyam Narang '04

The girls ran through the streets of Aguirre, laughing as they raced to collect the litter that lined the paths. Catching sight of the girls, the boys took off in the opposite direction, shouting to each other and pointing out the glass bottles, candy wrappers and bags they came across. “Hurry, hurry, before the girls take it all!” the smallest boy yelled in his rapid Chilean Spanish, barely able to lift the bag of garbage that was already bigger than he was.

One of the young girls turned and looked at me, her eyes wide with anticipation. “*Quién esta ganando?*” she asked, hoping it was her team that was winning the litter cleanup competition.

I shrugged my shoulders and smiled. “It’s a surprise,” I replied in my best Spanish.

As I walked back toward the children’s schoolhouse, my boots made a sharp crunching sound. It was my third week in Aguirre—a remote fishing island off the coast of Chile where I had come to help construct a medical center—and I still was not used to the broken white clamshells with which the streets were paved. When I reached the old wooden schoolhouse, I saw Gastón, the elderly town handyman who had agreed to help me out. The garbage that had accumulated over the years on Aguirre’s paths, in its drainages and around its trees and shrubs had been collected, bagged and stacked on the back of his beat-up truck.

“This is incredible!” Gastón said, scratching his white beard and gazing at the mountain of black trash bags. Thanks to the enthusiastic schoolkids, we had collected more than 50 bags, or a half-ton of litter. The two weeks I spent organizing the cleanup—talking with the students about the environment, making announcements on radio shows, creating posters and arranging logistics—had more than paid off. “I never imagined we could do so much,” Gastón added softly. Though he probably didn’t realize it, his words, and the smile that accompanied them, gave me an almost indescribable sense of achievement. The young girl had asked me who the winner was. That day, we were all winners—the children, Gastón and I—because together we had made an incredible difference.

This was the sort of lesson I had hoped for when I decided to take a year off after graduating from Exeter in 2004. Rather than enrolling at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, where I had been accepted, I decided to

spend the year doing international social service. Having studied Spanish at Exeter, I focused on the region of Latin America. Before arriving on Aguirre, I spent three months teaching English in the Peruvian highlands, in a village of mud houses and dirt streets outside of Ayacucho, and a month in Costa Rica, where I helped build homes in San Ramón with Habitat for Humanity. My three months in Chile were spent working with a London-based charitable organization called Raleigh International, which sent me to Aguirre and to a small frontier town, where I helped to build a hiking path and to raise awareness about recycling. The trip concluded with a memorable three-week trek in the Andes, where, along with 10 others, I made my way across 100 kilometers of desolate mountain terrain in bone-chilling temperatures.

My year has left me with many lasting impressions, but none stronger than a conviction in our capacity, even at a young age, to bring about change. After all, no one on the island of Aguirre—not the mayor, not the NGO that worked there, not the fishermen who lived there—had made a real effort to clean up the trash, even though many of them regarded it as a “great problem.” In the end, it took a student volunteer to realize that the solution was to involve the children of the island, who were proud of their town and eager to keep it clean!

My experience on Aguirre was certainly unique, but such insights into our ability to give back were common throughout my gap year—one of the most exciting and challenging times of my life and a choice I would recommend to any Exonian. I learned a lot at the Academy—at the Harkness table, and in my work with Student Council, ESSO and with the *Exonian*—but one of the things I learned is that there is only so much we can do in the classroom. While delaying college and taking an alternative path was difficult, it was my Exeter experience, with its emphasis on individual initiative and community service, which allowed me to choose such a path and to gain a perspective on my journeys. I credit the Academy with pushing me to take the time off and to pursue my education in new classrooms, including the island of Aguirre. ■

Sartaj Narang '04, of Fort Lauderdale, FL, will attend the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University this fall.